



*Peaceful Solution
Character Education*
PROGRAM



To Change The Hearts And Minds

ACCEPTANCE

The Peaceful Solution[®]

Character Education Program

The Peaceful Solution[®]

Character Education Program



*Practical Principles And
Techniques To Build Positive
Character In Today's World*

Teacher's Manual **Acceptance Unit**

By Yisrayl Hawkins

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All Inquiries should be addressed to:

The Peaceful Solution Character Education Incorporated

PO Box 2442

Abilene, TX 79604

849 Formosa St.

Abilene, TX 79602

Phone: (325) 676-9492

Fax: (325) 677-9023

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Preface

Influence From The Teacher

Thinking back on my early school years, I remember many of the things taught by my teachers that were not part of the regular curriculum. It was those teachings that influenced my thinking. Many of them still guide my actions, today.

I remember very early in my childhood, even before my school years, things my parents taught me that actually guided my interaction with others. One statement that I heard more than once from my father, in the face of some frustrating event, was “Son, two wrongs do not make a right.”

Had my father’s words not been mentioned in my hearing, but other, more damaging words, such as “Get even!” “Fight back!” “I’ll never forgive you for that!” or, “I’ll get you for that!” I may have treated others differently.

In my lifetime, I have seen many people retaliate—children, adults and nations. However, I have never seen peace brought by someone doing wrong to another after that person did wrong to him.

Teachers greatly influence our future leaders. This means teachers have a major impact on the outcome of the world’s future. Just a few words placed in a person’s mind, at the proper time, can actually guide that person’s thinking for the rest of his or her life.

A morally sound, wise, caring teacher can help one, ten, or ten thousand students on their way to becoming morally sound, wise, caring adults.

Reading *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* to any student will mean alot. Influencing the student with the personal determination to leave the classroom with the wisdom and knowledge found in these books will mean everything in the student’s life.

Everyone needs direction, but the early teen years are those when children actually seek direction primarily from those outside the home. Most children, during these years, feel that they know everything that their parents know. Therefore, they will listen more closely to those outside the home, thinking they will learn things that their parents don’t know.

The stage is therefore set because the teacher is exalted in their minds as the one having the answers. Hence, we dedicate these books

to the teachers; the world leaders of tomorrow.

The trust we place in you is the ultimate sacrifice. We place our children's lives in your hands because we know you will influence them positively. We are confident that they will be the beneficiaries of *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* with your influence.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Yisrayl Hawkins". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "Y".

Yisrayl Hawkins
Author and Promoter of
The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program

Introduction

The Peaceful Solution Character Education Incorporated is pleased to introduce you to the most unique, effective and practical character education program available today. You are holding a teaching tool that is guaranteed to minimize crime and violence, social disunity and moral degradation in the classroom, home and community.

Most people are involved in some kind of religion today, so when they express morality, they tend to be guided by what they have been taught by their churches, temples, synagogues or mosques. This is something we must guard against in public schools because of present laws concerning church and state.

We ask that you be aware of the fact that these lessons are designed only for the purpose of developing the student's character. These lessons teach proper, acceptable character education in a way that will penetrate and change the heart and mind of a student, or adult. This program will produce the result in young people that society desires to see.

We have noticed that these lessons are even more effective when the teacher encourages the practice of the principles of the lesson throughout the day as incidents arise between teacher and student, or student and student.

Please remember that your class will be an example, simply because character education is introduced into the school curriculum.

Teachers Are The True Leaders Of The World

All teachers now have the opportunity to make a great change in the character of their students. With the use of *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*, you are not only teaching, you are actually molding leaders who will use what you are instilling in them to bring about better living conditions in this world.

We must not fail to build moral values in the students we are now teaching. This will not just reflect in the child but in the entire world around us. That is, your leadership will be reflected in the actions of the leaders you have taught and will teach.

How To Use This Program

The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program consists have created five units that cover *Character, Acceptance, Self-Control, Respect* and *Responsibility*. Each unit is designed and formatted to gently lead the student with the basic concepts of character development to becoming a responsible citizen in society. It is important that you (the teacher) work through these units in the order presented to obtain maximum benefit. As you explore each unit, you will realize that the issues covered are very relevant to our young people. Take as much time as you can to explain the concepts, reiterate where and when possible, and solicit as much student participation as possible.

Teacher's Manual

The Teacher's Manual is comprised of seven lesson plans each followed by the corresponding chapter. These chapters are duplicated in the Student's Handbook.

Purpose/Objective

The purpose/objective is your evaluation tool for what or how much the students should learn from the lesson taught. Most of our objectives are measured in behavioral changes. Please watch for these changes as your indicator of which concept might need reinforcement.

Procedure

The steps outlined in the procedures are for flow and continuity. We ask that you read the procedures prior to presentation, in order to guide the students more effectively. Try to become very familiar with all the steps and the main ideas involved. Ask questions periodically to be sure your students understand what is being presented. If your objective is not adequately met, repeat it or use the Enrichment Activities, found in the handbook section of your manual, to increase understanding of the lesson. Enrichment Activities are also great for reinforcing the concepts taught.

Student's Handbook

The Student's Handbook is a replica of your manual, except that the student's handbook has the answers in the back. Encourage students to read their handbooks before class so they can contribute to discussions or help in problem solving. The activities are designed to help students apply the concepts taught in real life situations. Encourage students to complete the activities.

The Role Of The Teacher

As educators, it is extremely important that we understand the tremendous role we play in the lives of our students. Therefore, our participation in this program is essential to its success. Review the concepts every time a situation arises and not just when the lesson is presented. As significant influences in the lives of our students, we can lay the foundation to help them build strong moral character.

There is a solution to the problems in today's society. *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* has provided you with the solutions needed to make a difference through educating our children, on the values and morals they will need for a lifetime.

UNIT TWO

Acceptance

Introduction To The Unit

We currently live in a world where the inability to accept ourselves and those around us has led to problems ranging from depression and low self-worth to violence and war. Children who are unable to appreciate their positive character traits and who do not think that life has meaning and value will inevitably make decisions that will rob them of a purposeful, fulfilling life. Not only can they effectively remove themselves from the joys that life offers when they disregard true moral values, but they also take, by teasing and bullying, that joy from others.

This unit of *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* will teach children the importance of accepting themselves and the physical and moral characteristics that make them unique. In addition to this, they will learn to appreciate the uniqueness of others and the value of tolerance.

Other concepts presented in this unit are:

- Intolerance leads to hatred and violence.
- Acceptance of others requires moral, respectful and effective communication.
- Positive communication can result in friendships that are caring and supportive.
- Everyone's life has value, purpose and meaning.
- Having a purpose in life and positive moral goals will enable them to avoid negative risk-taking behaviors.
- A moral character will enable positive problem solving and sound, decision-making skills.

As educators and role models, we must teach children to coexist in peace and harmony. Only when children accept and respect themselves will they learn to truly accept and respect others. It is the hope of *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* that our schools can become a safe and peaceful place for our children, devoid of the fear, animosity and intolerance that are

Unit Two

plaguing classrooms and schools around the world.

When the moral values from this character education program can be taught to our youth today, there will be hope for them, a brighter future, and great concern for all humanity.

Chapter One

Accepting Me, Accepting You

Note To The Teacher

In this lesson, students will learn the importance of accepting the positive characteristics in themselves and others. They will learn that everyone is unique, and everyone owns the right to be respected as a human being regardless of their external inherent differences.

Many teenagers worry about things they cannot change. They worry about their external characteristics, the way their bodies look, their height, whether their ears or nose are too small or too large, or whether their skin is too dark or too light. Instead, students will learn to focus on the internal characteristics in themselves and others. They will learn to accept the superficial differences in others. They will begin to look beyond the surface for the positive, moral attributes that help make each person unique. Additionally, students will understand why it is important to shift their focus to the things they can control within their lives. By achieving this awareness, they will avoid feelings of depression and lack of self-worth and, instead, attain satisfaction and success in their lives based upon positive moral character.

Unit Two

Lesson Plan

Accepting Me, Accepting You

PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

Students will learn what it means to accept themselves and others, and the importance of accepting the positive moral characteristics in themselves and others.

MATERIALS

- Cassette player
- *Teacher's Manual Audio Lessons* cassette
- Students' handbooks

PROCEDURE

1. Review the previous unit on “**Character**” by asking the following questions:
 - a. What is meant by the term character? (*An individual's pattern of behavior and moral strength.*)
 - b. What are some positive moral character traits? (*Honesty, reliability, dependability and courage are all positive moral character traits.*)
 - c. Why is positive moral character important? (*Positive moral character will affect every decision you make, it will also bring you peace of mind. You will not have to suffer the consequences that immoral character bring such as guilt, fear, low self-worth, not being trusted and being unreliable.*)
 - d. What is meant by the term moral value? (*A moral value is like a line that divides wrong behavior from right behavior.*)
2. Explain to students that in this new unit called, “**Acceptance**,” they will explore the value of individuality, tolerance, positive interactions as well as positive goals that motivate and encourage. Tell students they will learn what it means to accept themselves and others. Have students turn to **page 3** and read the “**Introduction**.” Explain that accepting who we are means understanding that we all have aspects in our lives that are beyond our control.

For example, many of our physical traits are genetically determined. Ask students for examples of traits that are genetic. (*Answers will include eye color, which hand we use to write with, whether we are musically inclined or even our love for certain foods and colors.*) Stress that these physical traits, likes and dislikes make us all unique individuals.

3. Have students turn in their handbooks to **page 4** and read the section entitled, **“The Positive Side Of Me.”** Ask students to share with the class some of their positive traits and abilities. Take a few answers. Allow students time to list some of their positive traits and abilities and also some of the things they do well.

Continue reading in the handbook the section, **“Don’t Let It Get You Down,”** on **pages 5-8** and complete the chart on **page 7**. Have them list what they do and do not have control over. Allow a few volunteers to share with the class what they wrote.

4. Tell students that accepting who they are also means learning to be satisfied with their age. Guide class feedback by asking students some of the things they are allowed to do that a younger sibling is not allowed to. What are some things that an older sibling can do that they cannot? Stress that as they grow they will have limitations and privileges that are age appropriate. Have students read and discuss the section entitled, **“Hey! You’re Not Finished Growing Yet!”** found on **page 9** in their handbooks.

Explain that although there are circumstances beyond their control, they can control their attitude and outlook on life. Stress that how they interpret and perceive their circumstances can cause dissatisfaction and resentment. Explain that adolescence is a time of rapid physical and mental change. Many young adults feel uncomfortable with these changes. They may begin to devalue themselves and may suffer bouts of depression. Stress that focusing on what they can control and accepting themselves as unique individuals will enable them to develop their potential. Have students read the sections entitled, **“The Cold Hard Facts”** and **“Knowledge Is Power”** found on **pages 10-11**. Remind students that by learning *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* they can gain knowledge to help them develop their full potential.

5. Explain that by focusing on what cannot be controlled, we forfeit the opportunity to change and improve the things that can be controlled. Ask students to name a few things that they do have control over in their lives. Have students read the section entitled, **“When Life Hands You Lemons...”** found on **page 12** in their handbooks. Guide class discussion

by asking students to share a difficult experience and how they handled it. Encourage students to focus on what they can change and be determined to always practice behaviors that they learn from *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*.

6. Tell students that just as they must be willing to accept what makes them unique, they must also be willing to accept the uniqueness of others. Ask students how would they feel if someone were to tease or taunt them because of their facial features, size or even the way they dress. (*Answers may vary but should include: upset, hurt, embarrassed or humiliated.*) Discuss the words empathy and consideration in the section entitled, “**Accepting Others**” found on **page 13** in their handbooks. Explain that accepting others for who they are means accepting them regardless of their physical characteristics or circumstances. Have students turn to **pages 14-15** of their handbooks, read the scenarios and answer the questions that follow.

7. **Activity #1—Poem: Please Accept Me For Who I Am:** Play the poem entitled “**Please Accept Me For Who I am**” found on the *Teacher’s Manual Audio Cassette* while students follow along in their handbooks on **page 16**. Discuss the poem. Guide class feedback by asking the following questions:

- a. How would your life improve if you were more accepting of yourself?
- b. How would the atmosphere of your school change if all students were more accepting of each other?

Emphasize that accepting others allows opportunities to get to know and appreciate what makes them upright, moral individuals.

8. Conclude the lesson by encouraging students to accept the positive moral characteristics in themselves and others, to focus on what they can control to avoid feeling dissatisfied with their lives, and strive to achieve satisfaction and success. Allow them to turn to **page 17** of their handbooks and read the section entitled, “**What I Have Learned.**”

Unit Two

Note To The Student

A Is For Acceptance

Just what does it mean to accept yourself and others? The answer to this question is both simple and complex. Needless to say, everyone has aspects of his personality, character and physical characteristics that he would like to improve in some way, shape or form. In other words, no one is perfect. Even though there are things we may want to change about ourselves, we must be willing to identify the things about our character, personality and physical traits that are positive and worthwhile. Here is the problem. If you are unable to appreciate who you are as a unique person and you focus only on the things you don't like about yourself, your surroundings or your circumstances, you could miss out on the opportunity to improve yourself . You could also miss out on many of the joys that life has to offer. By focusing only on the negative you will eventually rob yourself of the opportunity to live up to your full potential.

The Cans And Cannots Of Life



Here is the bottom line. There will be things in your life that you will not be able to change and there will be things that you can. When you are

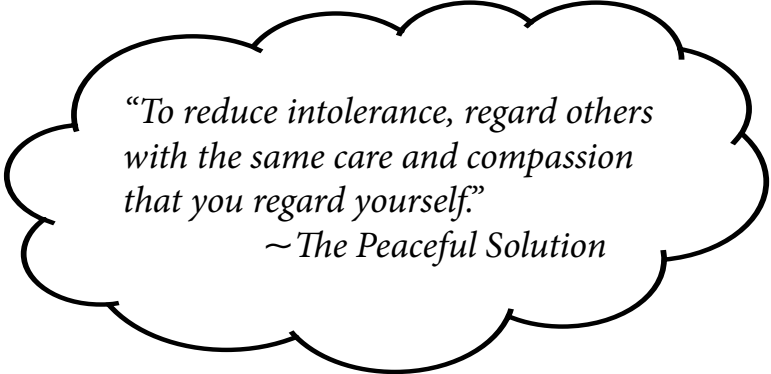


able to make a distinction between the two and focus on what you can change, you will demonstrate acceptance of who you are as a unique person. For example, let's say you are really short for your age and the likelihood of you being a tall person is very slim, because most people in your family are short. Not accepting yourself means focusing only on how short you are and failing to see all the great things you can accomplish. For instance, you could be kind, a great student, artistic and so on, but because you focus only on your height, you are unable to see anything else.

Now for the million dollar question. Can you change how tall or short you are? Of course, the answer is no, so why worry about it? Why should we put all of our energy on what we cannot change when there are so many ways we can improve ourselves. Think about it. Our character, attitude, intellect and the way in which we interact with others are all things we can change and improve. In fact, not only can we improve these things about ourselves, but we should.

Others Count Too

Here is something else to consider. Each person is just as important as you are. This means that as you learn to accept your life as worthwhile, remember that so are the lives of others. This is called tolerance and it is an important part of acceptance. Did you know that you can convey an attitude of acceptance to others by the way in which you communicate and interact with them? Did you know that poor communication causes conflicts? The best way to insure that others know that you accept them as individuals is through positive, moral interaction which is respectful, caring and compassionate. So, as you learn about acceptance, keep in mind that it pertains to you and others and that an attitude of acceptance requires positive moral character. Keep an open and alert mind as you read and study this book. Within its pages are lessons you can use for life.



*“To reduce intolerance, regard others
with the same care and compassion
that you regard yourself.”
~ The Peaceful Solution*

CHAPTER ONE

Accepting Me, Accepting You

Introduction

A **acceptance**, as presented in this unit of *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*, means to willingly acknowledge the positive characteristics about yourself and others. Acceptance means understanding that there are aspects of your life that you can and cannot change. In other words, some things you have control over and some you don't. For example, we are all predisposed genetically towards certain physical characteristics. Our skin and hair color are all predetermined by our family ancestry. Other things we have no control over are: where we were born, who our parents are, and even when we were born. In other words, we have to accept whatever age we are.

Accepting yourself means realizing that you are a unique human being. Your ability to make a difference in your life and the lives of others depends only on the amount of time and effort you put forth into your studies.

The Positive Side Of Me

Accepting who you are as an individual with moral potential begins with evaluating how you think about yourself and your abilities. Although at your age you have not reached your full moral potential, you can accept the type of person you are growing into and determine some of the things that are important to you. Developing a positive moral character should definitely be the main priority in your life.

It is ironic, however, that society puts so much emphasis on how we develop physically, but often neglects the importance of moral and ethical development. With so much emphasis placed upon physical beauty, clothes, shoes, jewelry and even what kind of house you live in, it can be easy to overlook the most important thing of all... the kind of moral character you are developing.

Use the boxes below to list some of your positive traits and abilities.

Positive Character Traits	Positive Personality Traits
<i>Example: Respectful, patient</i>	<i>Example: Friendly, caring</i>

Some Of The Things I Do Well Are:

Keep this list of positive character and personality traits and abilities in mind as you learn more about accepting yourself and others. An important aspect of acceptance is learning how to improve yourself without forgetting to value the positive things that make you the unique person you are.

The stature gained by achieving positive moral character far exceeds that of feet and inches, glamour or magnetism.

Don't Let It Get You Down

At times, it appears that every time you look in the mirror you see a different person. Your facial features are beginning to change, as well as your body. Adolescence is a time of rapid physical, mental and emotional changes. During adolescence you may experience many insecurities concerning your physical appearance. There can be many insecurities and it could be easy to forget the special and unique person you are. Believe it or not, feeling insecure at times is common and is a normal part of growing up.

The problem for many teens, however, is when they become so focused on their outward appearance, they neglect to build their moral character. Many young people between the ages of eleven to fifteen suffer from what is commonly called an identity crisis. Faced with society's views based on beauty and attractiveness, teens find themselves constantly trying to measure up to what is considered "sexy" and appealing. Society's standards are misleading and can lead to feelings of self-consciousness and self-criticism. Physical traits, such as freckles or a wide mouth on someone who is self-conscious, can cause that individual to spend a great deal of time focusing on a perceived physical flaw. One becomes self-critical when he or she begins to dislike their overall appearance because of the one physical trait that is perceived as a problem.



"Isn't it great that we don't have to wait a single moment to improve ourselves?"

Read the following excerpt from a teen's diary:

That's it! I am not going to smile anymore. I feel like the whole world can notice this gap in my teeth. Every time I talk, laugh or smile especially, it's like everyone is looking right at my mouth. They're probably wondering why my parents can't afford to buy me braces.

The following was adapted from an article found on a popular teen site:

Did your nose grow overnight? It's always been a honker. But today it's all over your face. Makeup, you decide, is the solution, so you spend another 45 minutes after your shower experimenting with nose slimming techniques and blush. Perhaps there's something you can do with your hair to camouflage your nose...

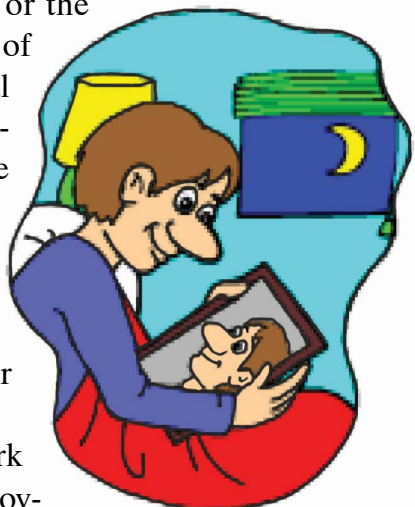
Teens Health, www.kidshealth.org

The above excerpts may seem comical at first, but they are clear indications of the turmoil that countless teens, both male and female, go through every day. Although it is commonly thought that girls tend to focus more on their physical appearance, boys are also concerned about their looks. They also worry about whether they are too tall or too thin or handsome.

Don't get the idea that as young men and women you should not be concerned about your physical appearance. Everyone should want to look his or her very best, but it would be wise to understand there are some things about your appearance you may not be able to change. It is important, though, to keep in mind that being beautiful or handsome are not all that matters.

So, if you have some physical characteristics that you cannot change, for example, the shape of your nose, your height or the sound of your voice, you can still make the best of who you are. You are more than just your physical appearance. Accepting yourself means understanding that as an adolescent you will experience some physical changes that may be uncomfortable, such as acne or a nose that seems to grow overnight, but this is all part of growing up. What really counts more than your appearance, as you will learn, is what you become within your mind, your character and what you choose to be.

In the meantime, be diligent to continue to work on the inside just as diligently as you work on improv-



ing your outward appearance. It is who you are inside that really affects how people see you on the outside. Make choices that will continue to build your positive moral character because if you focus only on the physical traits that you cannot change, it can cloud your ability to see and appreciate all the great things about yourself. This could result in depression and could seriously interfere with your ability to interact in meaningful ways with those around you. In other words, you can become a social recluse, or introvert and shy away from activities that you would ordinarily take part in.

In addition, at this stage in your development, many of the physical changes that you are experiencing are not within your power to control. That is, you cannot change the size of your feet, but there are many things that you can change and you do have control over. For example, you may not be able to control your height, but you can control the choices you make.

Fill in the chart below. On the left side, write a list of some of the things you can control, and on the right side, a list of some of the things you cannot control.

These Are Things I <u>Can</u> Control	These Are Things I <u>Cannot</u> Control
<p><i>Example: My attitude, manners</i></p>	<p><i>Example: My height, eye color</i></p>

Keep in mind that just because something is not within your control at this point in your life doesn't mean it will always be that way. Focus on the things you can control, like your attitude and grades, instead of worrying about the things you have no control over. Developing the moral character traits of patience and thankfulness can really help you at this stage of your life. Keep in mind that you will not be a teenager forever. Focus on educating yourself in moral development to achieve your highest potential. The awkward stages will pass, so be patient with yourself. In addition to this, don't forget to be thankful for all your many positive attributes. In case you have forgotten what they are, refer to **page 4**. Read this list often to remind yourself of your positive moral traits and add new ones as you advance in *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*.

Last, but not least, remember you are not the first adolescent in the world to go through this stage in life and you will not be the last. Don't let it get you down. This can be a wonderful time in your life that you will be able to look back on and remember the joy of learning to build your character.

Chew On This

"Depression can cloud everything, making even small problems seem overwhelming. People who are depressed can't foresee a bright future and feel powerless to change things for the better."

"Next time you look in the mirror, find the things you like about your reflection... Then look a little deeper and find the things you like about your character."



Hey! You're Not Finished Growing Yet!

**“So you don’t like your age?
Just wait a while. That’s the
nice thing about a person’s
age...it never stays the same!”**

Accepting yourself means accepting the age you are and the limitations that go with it. Because you are not yet an adult, you are limited in the choices you are allowed to make. For your own safety, as well as your physical and intellectual growth, your parents, teachers and other authority figures instruct, guide and monitor how you are influenced, the decisions you make, and how you conduct yourself. Remember, it is their responsibility to help you grow into the best person you can be. So even though you may be instructed on what time you should come home, who you should be friends with, what time you should go to sleep and even what you should eat, keep in mind that it really is for your benefit.

A humble, thankful attitude leaves no cause for conflict. Without a humble attitude, being instructed on what you should and should not do can seem frustrating. Many teens have a difficult time maintaining positive relationships with those in authority because they have opposing views of what is fair. Here’s the bottom line, even though you may not like a decision your parents or other authority figures have made for your benefit that you think is unfair, you must still be respectful and obey. If you have ever instructed a younger sibling to do something for his/her benefit and he/she refused, then you know how parents or other authority figures feel when they are disobeyed. Keep in mind that some day you may be a parent. How would you want to be treated when you are trying to do your best to protect, guide, feed and train your child?

The moral character trait of humility will help you accept instructions and guidance with a positive, respectful attitude, instead of arguing, becoming angry or refusing to obey. A humble person is willing to learn, be taught and follow directions. So 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. The process of learning moral conduct never ends. There is always room for improvement, even if you reach 100 years.

The



Hard Facts

1. Every year, increasing numbers of teenagers are victims of violent crimes. There is not one city in the United States with a population of over a thousand that has not experienced these violent crimes. So, think for a minute, if someone in your family or a friend were in danger of being a victim of a violent crime, would you not be worried? Don't be upset with your parents for wanting to know where you are at all times and giving you a curfew. They are trying to keep you safe.
2. Health studies show that the human body, especially the brain, will not develop properly unless it receives proper nourishment and plenty of rest. So, unless you desire to always be inadequate in your body and mind, respect curfew.
3. Being with, or around, the wrong people at the wrong time can wreck your entire life. Following the crowd can lead to making bad choices you could regret for the rest your life! This is why those in authority over you want to know who your friends are and what you are doing at all times.
4. There are many ways to wreck your health and ruin your opportunity for a great life.

Alcohol abuse:

- Damages liver
- Slows reflexes
- Clouds thinking

Nicotine:

- Very addictive
- Affects lungs, brain and liver
- Shortens life span

If an adult you know keeps giving you the “lecture” about the dangers of alcoholism and nicotine, not to mention drugs like cocaine or ecstasy, don't get upset. Just be glad they care.

Knowledge Is Power!

Taking your education seriously is another way you can demonstrate that you are a unique individual with moral potential. You have a responsibility to continuously pursue positive moral ways to improve yourself. Getting a sound education is one way in which you can do this. In addition to your basic subjects, English, Social Studies, Mathematics and Science, a sound moral education will assist you in being aware of what is going on in your community, nation and world. Well informed people are knowledgeable about the world around them. They pay attention to influences around them. They gather all the facts, then test and prove what is correct before making a decision.

Ironically, many teens report that youths who are smart are picked on. They are often called “nerds” or “geeks.” Hey, as hurtful as those names might be, what is even worse is neglecting your education. Be smart, studious and aware of what is going on around you. People who are informed and determined to maintain a positive moral character will not jeopardize their safety, health or future.



“Your mind is precious,

don’t waste it.”

~The Peaceful Solution



When Life Hands You Lemons...



People are faced with challenges, setbacks and disappointments every day. These adversities can come from a variety of sources. For example, thousands of children every year are subjected to physical, emotional or sexual abuse. Others are born with birth defects and some have learning disabilities because they were exposed to drugs and alcohol before they were born. There are those who are faced with sudden and catastrophic illnesses or accidents. These are just a few of the problems people face within our society. Even if you never have experienced these major upheavals, you will certainly be disappointed in one way or another from time to time. Even the daily grind can wear you down unless you are constantly keeping a positive outlook on life.

When things go wrong, as they sometimes will, you have a choice in the way you handle them. You can become overwhelmed and give up. This leads to a negative attitude, depression and feelings of helplessness. Or you can accept that the problem exists, and look at it in perspective. Looking at a problem in perspective means to be realistic about the problem in relation to the rest of your life. Have you ever met someone who acted as if every disappointment was the end of the world? He becomes so absorbed in his problems that he forgets that life goes on. Where there is life and determination to do the right thing, there is hope.

Using the positive character trait of optimism, which is the ability to look on the bright side of any situation, as well as determination and courage, will enable you to rise above and move beyond any hardships or difficulties you may face. When you deal with the disappointments that life sometimes hands you in a positive manner and learn from them, you can build and strengthen your moral character. Accept responsibility for making a difference in your life and the lives of others. With determination, along with the information you can learn in *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*, you can find a way to take the lemons life hands you and make lemonade. Do not allow life's challenges to get you down or cause you to lose hope, instead let them motivate you to succeed in reaching your full moral potential.

Accepting Others

Can you imagine being teased about something that you feel very sensitive about, something that is beyond your control at this time in your life? Can you imagine what a typical day at school would be like if you felt that you were not accepted by your peers? For many young adults this is a reality. They must deal with a lack of acceptance on a daily basis. Everyday, teens just like you, are teased and humiliated because others have not learned the moral principle of treating others with care and concern.

Accepting others means deciding to treat them the way you would like to be treated. It means putting yourself in their shoes, and asking yourself, “How would I feel if someone treated me this way or made fun of me?” The ability to put yourself in someone else’s shoes is called empathy. Having empathy is an important part of accepting and having consideration for others.

Accepting others means understanding that they too, have circumstances that are beyond their control, as well as positive traits and abilities. It means accepting them regardless of their nationality (*where they are from*), or ethnicity (*their culture and religion*). Accepting others does not mean condoning actions and attitudes that are negative, disrespectful or immoral. Nor does it mean agreeing with someone who is wrong, even if he is your friend. Accepting others simply means treating them with the same respect, empathy, and consideration that you would want to be treated with.

Consideration:
*To be thoughtful
of others.*

Empathy:
*To understand
how others feel.*



Scenarios

Read the following scenarios and answer the questions that follow.

1. A new student came to school who was twice the size of everyone in the class, yet he was the same age as everyone else. What should you do to show an attitude of acceptance?
 - a. Ignore him.
 - b. Point at him and begin laughing.
 - c. Treat him like everybody else.
 - d. Call him names.
2. Your cousin's friend is from Puerto Rico and has a strong accent. For him to be accepted he should:
 - a. Lose the accent and speak like an American.
 - b. Stop talking altogether and learn sign language.
 - c. Just continue to be himself and stop worrying about what others may say or do.
 - d. None of the above.
3. Sally is unable to afford the latest fashions. To be accepted she should not have to:
 - a. Steal
 - b. Borrow outfits from her friends.
 - c. Stay home, after all she shouldn't be seen without brand name clothes.
 - d. All of the above.
4. Pete has really big ears and so many freckles that his face is covered with them. To be accepted by his classmates, he should:
 - a. Wear a paper bag over his head.
 - b. Consider plastic surgery.
 - c. Just be himself, knowing it's what is on the inside that really counts.
 - d. Quit school.



5. Jim is really small for his age. Even though he tries hard he just can't play basketball. What could Jim do to be accepted by the other boys in his gym class?

- a. Keep trying his best.
- b. Get extra coaching after school.
- c. Be patient, he is continuing to grow and develop.
- d. All of the above.



6. Because of an illness, Regina is very overweight and does not participate in sports. What should the other students in the class do to show acceptance of her condition?

- a. Pick on her and call her names.
- b. Allow her the opportunity to be valued for her strengths.
- c. Avoid interactions with her completely.
- d. Tease her about her weight.

7. Sam is confined to a wheelchair and can have difficulty moving around school. Other students could show acceptance of his circumstances by:

- a. Opening the door for him.
- b. Clearing pathways when he needs to get through.
- c. Treating him like everyone else.
- d. All of the above.



Listen to the following poem then discuss it.

Please Accept Me For Who I Am



My hair may not be in the latest style,
But if you needed help, I'd go the extra mile.
Please accept me for who I am.

My shoes aren't always the latest trend,
But if you would try me, I'd be a great friend.
Please accept me for who I am.

My clothes may not always be up to date,
But if you needed me, I wouldn't hesitate.
Please accept me for who I am.

Maybe I'm too short, too tall, or not the right build,
But if you shared great news with me, I would be thrilled.
Please accept me for who I am.

Maybe I have an accent and don't talk the way you do,
But if you were having tough times, I would help you through.
Please accept me for who I am.

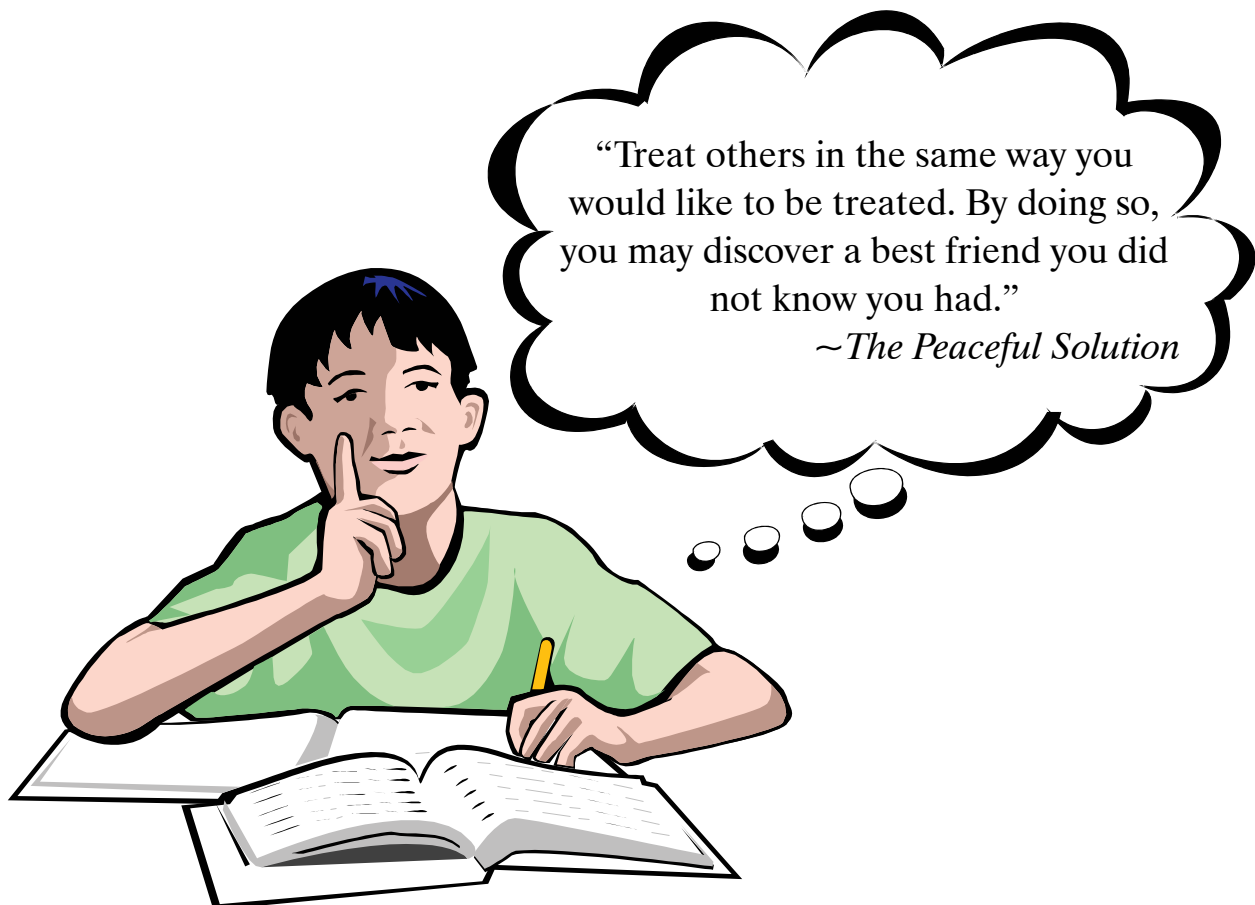
I don't play sports, I'm not athletic, or strong,
But if you need a shoulder,
mine is here for you to lean on.
Please accept me for who I am.

You see... you and I are a lot alike,
We want to be loved,
and do what's right.
We both get up each morning to
start a new day,
We should accept one another,
this is the right way.
Please accept me for who I am.



What I Have Learned

- ☑ Although there are some things in my life that are beyond my control, I do have control over my attitude and outlook on life.
- ☑ The way I perceive and handle the various circumstances in my life can help me to achieve success if I have a positive attitude and practice what I learn from *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*.
- ☑ I have an obligation and a responsibility to myself to pursue a sound education and to be knowledgeable about the world around me.
- ☑ Empathy and consideration are two very important character traits that will enable me to treat others the way I would want to be treated.
- ☑ Accepting others does not mean agreeing with their negative or immoral behaviors. Rather, it is a willingness to interact with respect, empathy and consideration.



Enrichment Activities

1. Draw a self-portrait and write at least ten positive things about yourself.
2. Write a research paper about someone who, despite a lack of acceptance by others, was able to achieve great success.
3. Watch or listen to a motivational speaker. Then discuss the positive and negative thoughts brought forth.
4. Do the “**Just For Fun**” activities on **pages 19-21**.





Just For Fun



Activity #1

Unscramble each word and write it on the line.

1. sednerfetic _____ *differences* 5. cneatpecac _____ *acceptance*

2. reep ersusrep _____ *peer pressure* 6. tsaftsaed _____ *steadfast*

3. euniqu _____ *unique* 7. ytomirfcon _____ *conformity*

4. coltnic _____ *conflict* 8. gfititn ni _____ *fitting in*

acceptance
conflict

conformity
differences

fitting in
peer pressure

steadfast
unique



Just For Fun



Activity #2



Use the clues to complete the puzzle.

					¹ p						² f							
³ u	n	i	q	u	e	i						t						
					e						t							
					r						i							
											c							
					p	⁵ a	⁶ c	c	e	p	t	a	n	c	e			
					r						o							
					⁷ d	i	f	f	e	r	e	n	t					
					o						g							
					r													
					m						i							
					i						n							
					t						f							
					y						l							
					e						i							
										c								
										⁸ s	t	e	a	d	f	a	s	t

ACROSS

- 3. being one of a kind
- 5. to agree with
- 7. not the same
- 8. to stand strong for a belief

DOWN

- 1. to be influenced to do something in order to be accepted
- 2. the act of trying to become alike in form or character
- 4. likeness in form or character
- 6. a problem or disagreement



Just For Fun

Activity #3



Using the words below, match the words to their appropriate boxes.

1.

a	c	c	e	p	t	a	n	c	e

5.

c	o	n	f	l	i	c	t

2.

f	i	t	t	i	n	g		i	n

6.

d	i	f	f	e	r	e	n	c	e	s

3.

c	o	n	f	o	r	m	i	t	y

7.

p	e	e	r		p	r	e	s	s	u	r	e

4.

u	n	i	q	u	e

8.

s	t	e	a	d	f	a	s	t

acceptance	conformity	fitting in	steadfast
conflict	differences	peer pressure	unique

Chapter Two

Accepting Diversity

Note To The Teacher

Failing to accept the differences in others has led to untold suffering of many innocent people throughout history. It is difficult to imagine looking at another living, breathing, human being and physically, emotionally or psychologically abusing them because of the color of their skin, their age or place of birth. Yet, everyday, people both young and old are victims of discrimination and prejudice. They are beaten and spat upon, humiliated and demoralized because they are perceived as different. But just how different are we? Do our differences warrant the hostilities and hatred that have become commonplace between people everywhere?

It is a proven fact that intolerance and hatred are learned behaviors. If children can be taught to hate, they can also be taught to value life and to have compassion for others. As educators, we have the monumental task of teaching children to value the lives, health and well-being of every human being, regardless of how different they may be. Someone once said that the highest form of education is tolerance.

The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program believes that there are two steps toward eradicating the hatred which results in prejudice:

- a. Looking beyond the superficial differences of others.
- b. Learning, through *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*, how to discern and appreciate the character of others, which is at the core of who they really are.

Unit Two

Lesson Plan

Accepting Diversity

PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

Students will learn that an attitude of acceptance will eradicate the hatred and conflicts caused by intolerance.

MATERIALS

- Six apples (as different as possible)
- One large brown paper bag
- Students' handbooks

PROCEDURE

1. Review the previous lesson, “**Accepting Me, Accepting You**” by asking students the following questions:
 - a. What are some of our physical characteristics that are genetically determined? (*Answers may include the color of eye, hair, shape of nose or height.*)
 - b. Why is it wrong to make fun of the way someone looks, dresses, or speaks? (*Because it hurts, is embarrassing, humiliating and upsetting to be teased and taunted.*)
 - c. How should we treat others? (*We should treat others as we would want to be treated—with care, concern and respect.*)

2. Tell students that they will learn more about the importance of accepting the diversity of others. Explain that they will learn that intolerance, the opposite of acceptance, has led to hatred, conflicts and wars. Stress that the world contains over six billion people with many different cultures and beliefs. It is imperative that each individual learn to appreciate, respect and value the uniqueness of every person on our planet. Without the respect and understanding that acceptance brings, we will continue to live in a world where people are mistreated because of superficial differences. Have students turn in their handbooks to **page 23** and read and discuss the “**Introduction.**”

3. Ask students to turn in their handbooks to **page 24** and read the section entitled, **“An Equation of Hate.”** Discuss the meanings of the words **intolerance, superiority, racism** and **discrimination**. Emphasize that these words exist as part of our vocabulary because of a lack of acceptance for those perceived as being different. Stress that an intolerant attitude is learned. Hate is an attitude we learn and intolerance is derived from fear and a false sense of superiority.

4. Tell students that intolerance, which is the opposite of acceptance, can be seen in many different forms, but regardless of the form, the effects are always the same—devastation and devaluation. Explain to students that hate is born of intolerance. Hate can lead to crimes of violence toward people and their property, and even to murder. Instruct students to turn to **page 25** in their handbooks and read the section entitled, **“Intolerance Hurts.”** Have them answer the questions found on **page 27** after reading the article, **“Sticks And Stones.”**

Inform students that intolerance has dotted the world’s history with conflicts, wars and the murders of countless men, women and children. Have students turn to **page 28** in their handbooks and read the section entitled **“Intolerance Leads To Conflicts.”**

5. Instruct students to turn to **pages 30-31** of their handbooks and read the sections entitled, **“Just How Different Are We?”** Discuss the implication of how “different” we all are by asking students if there are any valid reasons for separating and classifying people into categories called races. Guide further class discussion by asking the following questions:

- a. How many races are there? (*1, The human race.*)
- b. What percentage of our genes account for our physical differences? (*0.1%*)

6. **Activity—An Apple A Day keeps Intolerance Away:** This activity will stress the importance of not categorizing people according to stereotypes. Students will gain an appreciation for the need to get to know others as unique individuals. Have students form six groups. Hand out one apple to each group and instruct each group to quickly look at their apple and pass it around. After a few moments, collect the apples and mix them up in the brown bag. Place apples on a flat surface and call one volunteer from each group to identify and choose the apple that belonged to their group.

Inform students that there are many different varieties of apples.

However, when you cut them open, they are the same inside. Cut the apples in half to demonstrate. Emphasize that the human race is the same. We may have different colored skin, eyes, and hair, but we are the same on the inside. Have students answer questions at the end of the activity found on **page 32** of their handbooks.

7. Tell students that knowledge is powerful and can bring about change. Explain that they now have the knowledge to make a difference in their lives by practicing acceptance. They are now ready to take on the challenge of making a difference. Have students turn to **pages 33-34** in their handbooks and read the sections entitled, **“Make A Difference, Make A Choice”** in order to answer the questions that follow the scenario. Tell students they are to be respectful even when dealing with those who may be intolerant. Stress that the most effective way to deal with intolerance is to make a difference by their example of practicing the values that they learn from *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*.

8. Have students turn to **page 35** and read the section entitled, **“It’s All About Getting Along.”** Instruct students to complete the assignment found at the end of the page. Allow students time to share some of their ideas with the class.

Have students read the section in their handbooks entitled, **“It Is All About Forgiveness”** found on **page 37**. Discuss the questions at the bottom of the page, allowing students to write in their answers. Encourage students to always practice forgiveness of others who have not yet learned from this program. Remind them that their example will be the best way to begin teaching acceptance to others.

9. Conclude the lesson by having students turn to **page 39** and reading the section, **“What I Have Learned.”** Remind students to practice acceptance with all people. Encourage them to resist the tendencies to categorize people and make generalizations about others. Stress that what really matters about anyone, regardless of physical characteristics, is who they are on the inside and what kind of character they have. Are they kind, caring, compassionate? Do they make positive moral choices? Stress that these questions can only be answered by being committed to getting to know people for the unique individuals they are.

Unit Two

*“Prejudice stems from ignorance.”
~The Peaceful Solution*

Chapter Two

Accepting Diversity

Introduction

Look around you. Notice that no two people are exactly alike. Even twins who may be physically identical can have character and personality traits that are completely opposite. The next time you watch TV or go to the park or mall, notice the many different types of people there are. In addition to our physical differences, we also have different cultures and values. As you learned from the previous chapter, people do not choose their physical characteristics or where they were born. What we can choose, however, is to accept and value each person as a unique human being who deserves to be treated with respect, compassion and empathy.

Immoral, negative character should always be discouraged. All people should be accepted. If they display negative moral traits, those traits should be rejected and the behavior pointed out.

No person should be rejected because of physical characteristics. During the course of history, wars have been fought because of a lack of acceptance of people who were physically different. What causes people to mistreat and hate one another because of their physical and ethnic differences? Can we learn to coexist and respect each other or will our differences continue to cause conflicts, hatred and war? In this chapter, we will explore these questions and more. You will learn that accepting others, looking past what makes us different and focusing on our similarities, will lead us to a place called appreciation and respect.

Read the following words and become familiar with their definitions.

An Equation Of Hate

intolerance

(Unwilling to accept any person and unwilling to help them overcome things that are not beneficial.)

+

inconsiderate

(Displaying a lack of thoughtful concern for others)

+

racism

(The mistreatment of a group of people due to nationality and ethnicity.)

+

discrimination

(Treatment or consideration based on class or category rather than individual merit; partiality or prejudice.)

=

HATE

(An intense hostility; extreme dislike.)



**These words are part of our vocabulary
because of a lack of acceptance.**



Intolerance Hurts

Intolerance, the opposite of acceptance, takes many different forms. Stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination are all ways in which intolerance manifests itself in our society. Regardless of the form it takes, the effects are always the same. Intolerance, when directed at an individual, community or nation, results in fear, distrust, anger, resentment and even war.

An intolerant attitude starts when one judges others unworthy to live in peace and security because of superficial differences, such as the color of their skin, their culture or their beliefs. Regardless of these differences, there must be a basic, fundamental value and respect for all human life. Keep in mind that respect is regarding someone or something as important and showing honor and concern.

Basic, fundamental respect for all people means to:

- Avoid violent verbal or physical behavior.
- Interact with consideration of other's needs by showing compassion.

Without value for life, respect and compassion, the result is hatred in the form of intolerance. Some people who are intolerant demonstrate their hate and contempt for others by physically or verbally assaulting them and their property. These forms of intolerance have been classified as hate crimes. Hate crimes deprive others of the right to live in peace. These crimes can range from property damage to murder. Hate crimes can leave victims feeling angry, depressed, afraid and distrustful. The victims of hate crimes are sent a clear message that they are not welcome in a particular neighborhood or community.



Victims Of Intolerance

Read the following articles about the effects of intolerance.

Rampaging Hindus Burn Muslim Children Alive

India's worst outbreak of Hindu-Muslim violence for a decade escalated yesterday with the deaths of 60 more people in the riot-torn western state of Gujarat amid fears the violence could spread.

A political crisis also loomed as the Indian Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, begged Hindu militants to halt inflammatory plans to raise a temple over the rubble of the mosque.

Six rioters were shot dead by police and at least seven Muslims were stabbed to death as towns in Gujarat erupted. Muslim businesses, homes, vehicles and mosques were set alight.

A single act of violence stood out on a day of horror. A 2,000 strong mob surrounded a block of Muslim flats in the Hindu-dominated area of Meghaninagar and set it alight. A dozen children and 26 adults were thought to have been burned alive. The mob blocked roads to stop police and firefighters from rescuing victims.

The mobs were out for revenge after nearly 60 Hindu activists from the Hindu World Council (VHP) were murdered by Muslims who hurled firebombs into their train at Godhra station on Wednesday.

The horror of that attack, in which 14 children died, stoked an atmosphere of intercommunal hatred that threatens to spread to other states...

Nick Meo in Delhi 3/1/02
Independent News

Jury Shown Human Billboard Of Hate In Texas Dragging Case

JASPER, Texas (CNN)—Texas prosecutors in the trial of one of three white men accused of dragging a black man to his death said Wednesday that John William King did not wear his hatred on his sleeve, but wore it all over his body.

Prosecutors showed color photographs of dozens of intricate racist, satanic and neo-Nazi tattoos on King's body to the jury.

2/17/99 cnn.com

Jews Attacked In Separate Incidents In Chicago

CHICAGO, Illinois (CNN)—Chicago police are treating as possible hate crimes two separate attacks against Jews in the city's north side.

No injuries were reported in the attacks late Thursday night near Rogers Park.

In the first incident, at least three slingshot-wielding men in a van fired marbles at three people about 10 p.m.

Police arrested three teens—a 14-year-old and two 17-year-olds—who said they were Palestinians. Police spokesman Kevin Haley told CNN that officers found slingshots, marbles and hate literature in the van.

Soon afterward, at 10:21 p.m., a 43-year-old rabbi wearing a traditional black jacket and black hat was attacked in a drive-by shooting. No arrests were made.

"They called him by name and opened fire," Haley said. "It's just a possible hate crime... They're still investigating."

10/13/00 cnn.com

These are only a few of the millions of cases of intolerance that occur every day in today's world. Only a few are shown here and certainly not the more violent ones. Just by watching your local news, you would be aware of these and many other similar crimes.

Hatred is much more shocking when it involves a member of your own family or a close friend. It could occur in your life, unless we all make a change to our attitudes.



Sticks And Stones



When I was 11, our family moved to Hawaii where my father had been assigned to lead the Navy band at Pearl Harbor. My mother enrolled my brother and me for music and literature courses. Later the band director at Punahou School suggested that my brother take the entrance exam, and my parents signed me up to take it as well. It was 1959, being a new girl in an (impressive) institution is always an excruciating hardship. Many of the students had been together at the school since kindergarten and were less receptive to a socially awkward, chubby, bucktoothed girl from the mainland. On a break, as I was sitting in a bathroom stall, I heard several girls enter the room...It quickly became obvious that they were talking about me, in the most

unflattering terms. They busily dissected me, mocking my hair, my weight, my shoes, my clothes, my voice and my manner until one of them noticed my shoes in the stall.

“Uh-oh, she’s in here.”

I heard one of them whisper. And then the hurried sound of their exit. What occurs to so many 11-year olds in this world is so unspeakably worse than my story...What is extraordinary is the effect it had on me. It became a burden I carried with me for years...What those girls did to me was bad enough, but what was worse was the way I internalized their rejection and carried it with me throughout my adolescence...

By Kathleen Norris
Reader’s Digest
 November 2001



Answer the following questions.

1. How do you think the character in this excerpt felt when she found out the girls were talking about her? *(Hurt, ashamed, embarrassed and discouraged)*

2. What long-term effects do you think this experience had on the life of this young girl?
(Decreased sense of self-worth, withdrawal, depression.)

3. If you were in this same situation, how would this experience make you feel? _____
(Answers will vary but may include embarrassed, hurt, depressed and distrustful.)

4. What would you do if your friends were treating someone that way? *(Answers will vary but may include, tell them to consider the feelings of others, to realize and accept that we are all different and we must accept one another the way we are.)*

Intolerance Leads To Conflicts

CONFLICT:

Fight, battle, and war.

WAR:

*Declared armed fighting
between states or nations.*

VALUE:

*To consider as important,
worthy.*

Intolerance is not a new concept. For thousands of years, intolerance, racism, and stereotyping have caused hatred, violence and wars. An unwillingness to accept diversity has resulted in the loss of countless lives of men, women and children. Read your history books, newspapers, and watch the world news. You will clearly see the conflicts that were brought about because of intolerance. Here are some examples of the effects of intolerance throughout our history.

The Holocaust

The Holocaust of World War II represents a time period of intense hatred, prejudice and discrimination that resulted in the deaths of approximately nine million men, women, and children. Six million of the people exterminated were Jews. The other three million consisted of gypsies, blacks, handicapped, or mentally retarded. Nine million people died because of intolerance. They died because their ethnicity, physical characteristics, religious preferences and mental capabilities collided with Hitler's racist ideologies.

The Civil Rights Movement

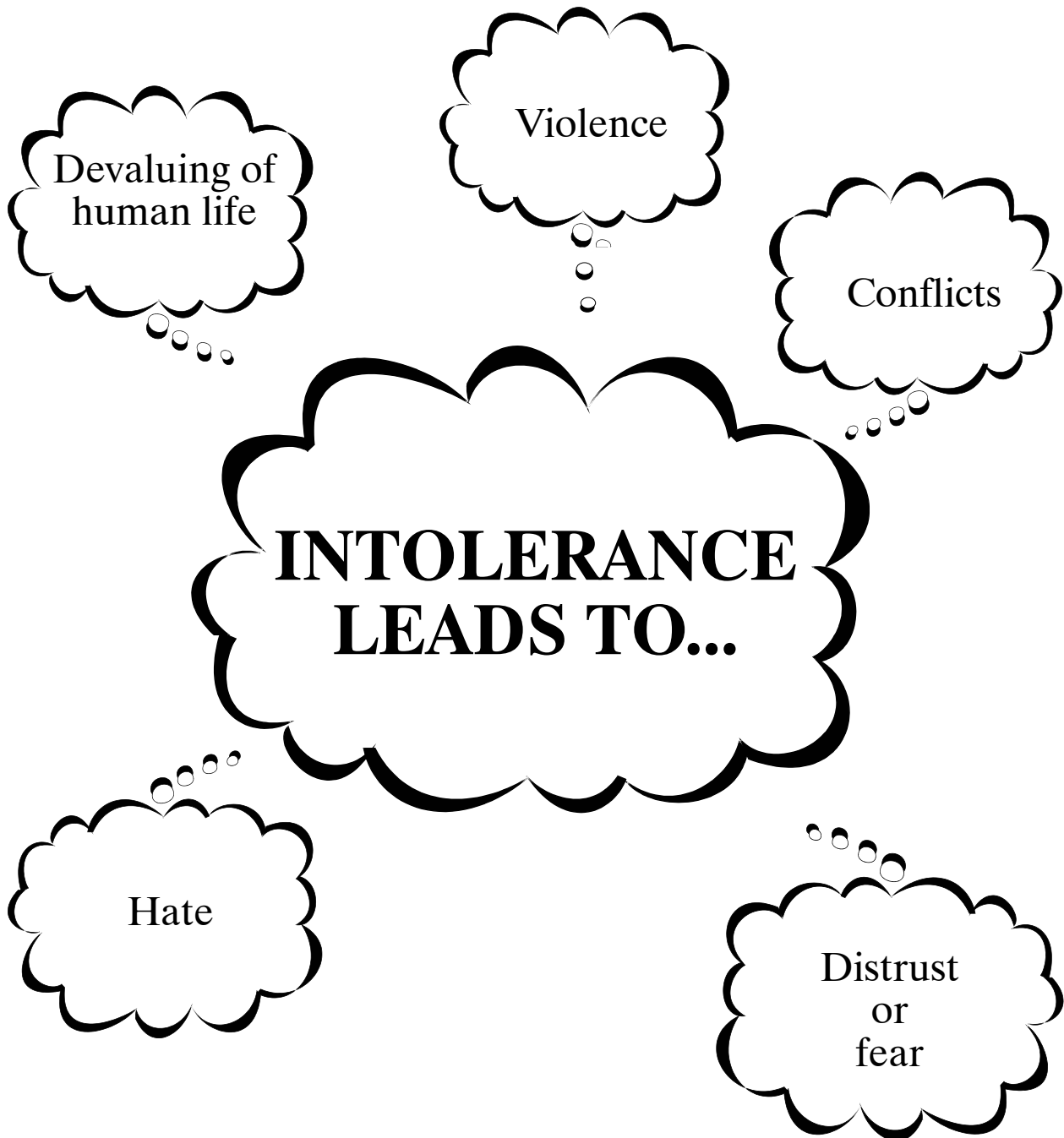
One hundred years after the Civil War, blacks were still struggling to be accepted as equals in American society. Their world consisted of discrimination, segregation and racial inequality. The Civil Rights Movement was a time in history when black Americans counteracted laws of segregation and discrimination with nonviolent demonstrations, boycotts, and marches. In a short period of time, over the 1950's and 60's, the Civil Rights Movement put an end to racial discrimination by the law.

September 11th, 2001

This has been called the most tragic day in American history. It was the day that terrorists hijacked four commercial passenger planes and flew them into the World Trade Center Twin Towers and the Pentagon. The fourth plane crashed eighty miles southeast of Pittsburgh. Thousands of lives were destroyed that day. Those who died in the attack left behind loved ones who had to deal with the loss of parents, husbands, wives and children. Racially singling out those who are Arab or Muslim and blaming them for this tragedy is yet one more example of the danger of stereotyping and intolerance. Blaming an entire nation or religion for the actions of a few will not bring back those who died on September 11th.

Again, these represent only a small portion of the countless lives that have been wasted through hatred and ignorance.

“No one should be made to feel as if he is less than who he is, just so someone else can feel great about himself for a short time..”



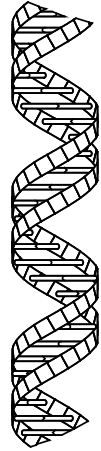
Just How Different Are We?

With so much emphasis placed upon our physical differences, the color of our skin, as well as where we are from, you would think that we were very different. Test your knowledge. Take the quiz below then read the following articles on the latest discoveries about race.

Test Your Knowledge

Circle the correct answer.

1. How many races of people are there in the world?
a. 7
b. 10
c. 12
d. 1
2. What percentage of our genes accounts for physical differences?
a. 20%
b. 30%
c. 60%
d. 0.1%



Biological Differences Among Races Do Not Exist, WU Research Shows

Race doesn't matter. In fact, it doesn't even exist in humans. While that may sound like the idealistic decree of a minister or rabbi, it's actually the conclusion of an evolutionary and population biologist at Washington University.

Alan R. Templeton, Ph.D., professor of biology in Arts and Sciences, has analyzed DNA from global human populations that reveal the patterns of human evolution over the past one million years. He shows that while there is plenty of genetic variation in humans, most of the variation is individual variation. While between-population variation exists, it is either too small, which is a quantitative variation, or it is not the right type of qualitative variation—it does not mark historical sub-lineages of humanity.

Using the latest molecular biology techniques, Templeton has analyzed millions of genetic sequences found in three distinct types of human DNA and concludes that, in the scientific sense, there is no such thing as race.

By Tony Fitzpatrick
10/15/98

Do Races Differ? Not Really, Genes Show

In this election year, politicians want to pitch one up and invite the multi-cultural folds to “Come on under!” The message that both parties seek to convey is: regardless of race or creed, we really are all kin beneath the skin.

Yet whatever the calculated quality of this new politics of inclusion, its sentiment accords firmly with scientists' growing knowledge of the profound genetic fraternity that binds together human beings of the most seemingly disparate origins.

Scientists have long suspected that the racial categories recognized by society are not reflected on the genetic level. But the more closely that researchers examine the human genome—the complement of genetic material encased in the heart of almost every cell of the human body—the more most of them are convinced that the standard labels used to distinguish people by “race” have little or no biological meaning.

They say that while it may seem easy to tell at a glance whether a person is Caucasian, African or Asian, the ease dissolves when one probes beneath surface characteristics and can scan the genomes for DNA hallmarks of “race.”

By Natalie Angier
The New York Times Company, 3/22/00

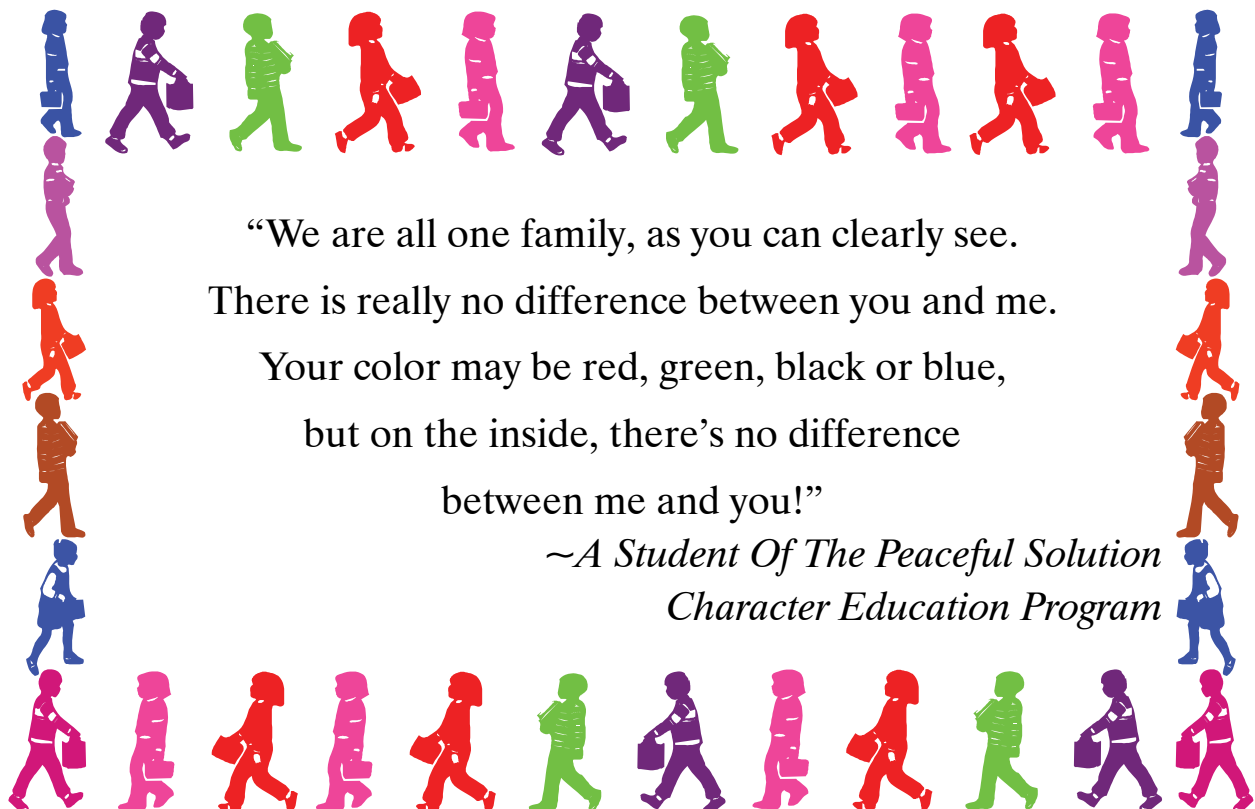
Did You Read That? There Is Only One Race!

Not So Different After All

The world's population is an estimated six billion people. Six billion people and only one race, sharing 99.9% of the same genes. We are not so different after all. With only 0.1% of our genes accounting for our physical differences, should our focus be upon the variation in the color of our skin, or the slant of our eyes? What is more important, the 0.1% that accounts for our differences, and has led to hatred and violence or the 99.9% of our similarities?

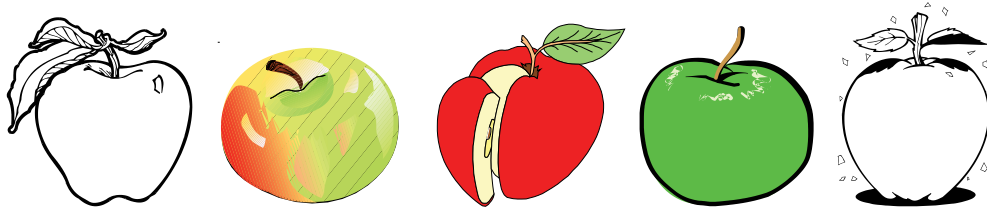
Acceptance means acknowledging the many similarities that exist between each member of the human race and embracing these differences by consciously making an effort to become more respectful towards people of other cultures and nationalities.

It also means appreciating the various nationalities and ethnicities. Instead of finding reasons to alienate each other, let's focus on all the similarities that we share.



An Apple A Day Keeps Intolerance Away

Red Delicious, Granny Smiths, Jonathans—What do they all have in common? If you had a bowl of McIntoshs, could you tell one from another?



Answer the questions below.

1. What were some of the differences among the apples? _____
(They were different varieties. They could have different uses.)

2. What were the similarities that the apples shared? _____
(They are all apples. They have white flesh on the inside. They have a core with seeds.)

What Really Matters?

The human race can be compared to the apples in this activity. We may have different physical characteristics, but inside, we are the same. Rather than focusing on one another's differences (black, white, rich, poor, skinny, fat), let's focus on our similarities—after all, we are all human. We all want to be loved and needed. We want to fit in and be accepted and we all have the potential to learn the value of a positive moral character.

Make A Difference, Make A Choice

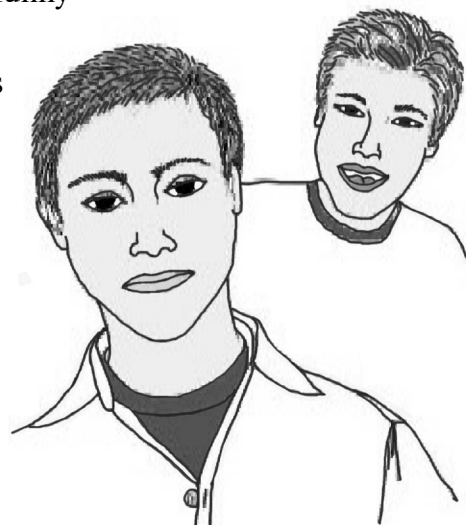
Now that you know how damaging hatred and intolerance are, you have a responsibility to share this knowledge with others and to stand up for acceptance even when others insist on an attitude of intolerance.

Standing up for acceptance of others in the face of opposition means having determination, courage and compassion. It also means behaving in a way that demonstrates respect for all people. For example, a new boy comes to school, and he is from another country and speaks with an accent. He is also handicapped and walks with a limp. Your friends start mocking the way he walks and talks. They laugh at him when he walks by. Standing up for acceptance means not laughing with your friends. It also means explaining to them that what they are doing is wrong. I'm sure you have figured it out by now. Doing what is right is not always easy and you will have to be courageous. It only takes one voice to make a difference. Let that voice be yours. Do you realize that the person being taunted could actually be a member of your own family?

Read the following scenarios and circle the answer that shows an attitude of acceptance.

1. Your brother comes home and shares a racial joke with you. He's laughing so hard, he can barely get the words out. What should you do?

- a. Laugh along with him. After all, a funny joke is a funny joke.
- b. Tell him that it's wrong to make jokes about others, then laugh when he leaves the room.
- c. Tell him that it is wrong, but later share the joke with your friends.
- d. Tell him the joke is not funny, and it promotes intolerance. Explain the damage intolerance brings and do not repeat the joke to anyone else.



2. During class there is a discussion about terrorism. Most of the class wants to “nuke” the nation where the terrorists were from. What do you say?

- a. “Hey, I think we should “nuke” them. Those people don’t care about us.”
- b. “Hey, you can’t destroy innocent people because of what a few did.”
- c. “It would be great if the governments found a way to have better communication with each other to avoid all the violence.”
- d. Both b and c



3. Your friend pretends to be tolerant and accepting of others when someone of a different nationality is around, but behind their backs, she mocks them and makes derogatory comments about everyone who is different from her. How can you handle this situation?

- a. Talk to her and tell her why what she is doing is wrong.
- b. Try to ignore her. If they can’t hear her, what’s the harm?
- c. Do not take part in her negative comments and consider whether you really want this person as a friend.
- d. Both a and c



It's All About Getting Along

In addition to accepting the diversity of others, acceptance is also about letting others know that you will interact with them in a way that is moral and respectful. Did you know that there are people who have careers in making visitors from other countries feel accepted? These people are skilled in what is known as diplomatic relations. They learn about the customs and practices of people from other countries to make visitors feel at home. For example, did you know that in some countries it is polite to belch after eating? It shows that you enjoyed the food. Not belching is considered rude. It is the equivalent of telling the cook that the food was horrible.

Here are a few ways in which you can practice your skills in diplomatic relations:

- Be determined not to make derogatory remarks or put others down for any reason. Remember the apple activity and avoid accepting negative concepts about others based only on their physical characteristics or places of birth.
- Choose your words carefully when speaking to others and communicate respectfully.
- Learn about some of their customs so that you do not offend them and make them feel uncomfortable or unwelcome.



By practicing these simple rules you will gain many friends, even in a world full of hate.

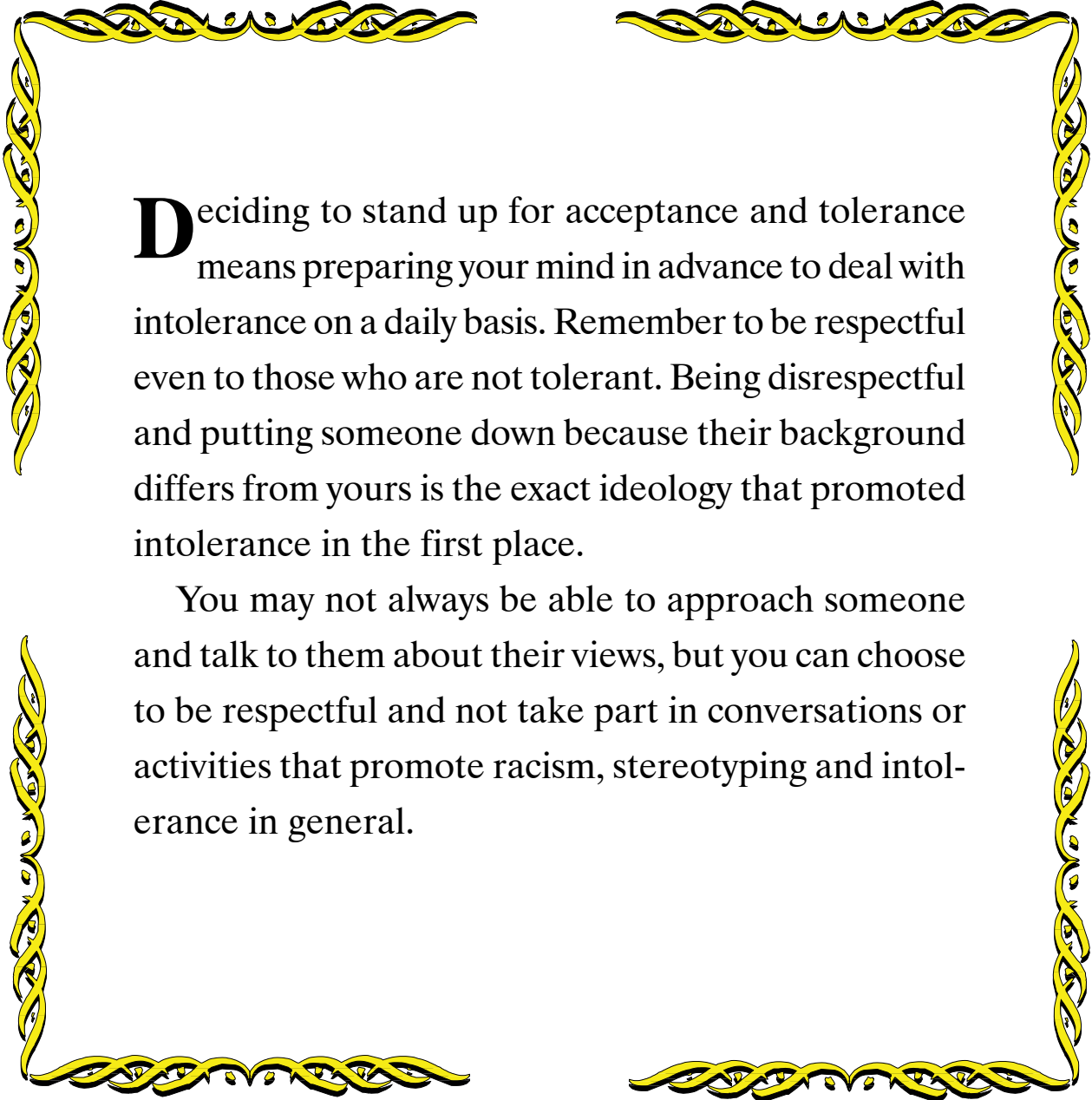
Foreign Exchange Student

Your teacher informs you that there is a foreign exchange student who will be joining your class. You have been assigned as the class diplomat. The foreign exchange student does not speak your language well and is unfamiliar with the customs and practices of your nation. Your job is to help this new student feel comfortable and accepted in this new environment. You have one day to prepare for his or her arrival to your class.

Use the lines below to list some things you can do or say to make his or her stay in a new country a pleasant one.

Answers may include teaching the foreign student principles that would ensure his safety and the safety of those he would encounter.

Be Prepared

A decorative border made of yellow and black braided ribbons surrounds the text. The border is composed of four segments: a top-left corner, a top-right corner, a bottom-left corner, and a bottom-right corner, each with a wavy, braided pattern.

Deciding to stand up for acceptance and tolerance means preparing your mind in advance to deal with intolerance on a daily basis. Remember to be respectful even to those who are not tolerant. Being disrespectful and putting someone down because their background differs from yours is the exact ideology that promoted intolerance in the first place.

You may not always be able to approach someone and talk to them about their views, but you can choose to be respectful and not take part in conversations or activities that promote racism, stereotyping and intolerance in general.

It Is All About Forgiveness

Another important aspect of dealing with intolerance is to be willing to forgive others when they are intolerant towards you. If you have experienced intolerance in any form, your first reaction might be to feel hurt or disappointed or you might even have thoughts of revenge. Deal with your feelings of hurt and disappointment appropriately by talking to a trusted adult or friend. You must then learn to forgive. Forgiving others who have wronged you may not be the easiest thing to do; but, without this very important character trait, your hurt and disappointment can turn into anger, resentment and hate.

When you hold on to these negative emotions, you can develop an intolerant attitude. In other words, if you do not learn to forgive others, you risk becoming intolerant and treating them in the same negative way. Practicing The Peaceful Solution means making a genuine effort to interact with all people in a moral way, even the ones who have been intolerant towards you. By maintaining the positive character traits of forgiveness and respect, you can serve as a moral influence to others. Always remember that two wrongs never make a right. Retaliation never solves problems, it only creates more.

Answer the questions on the lines below.

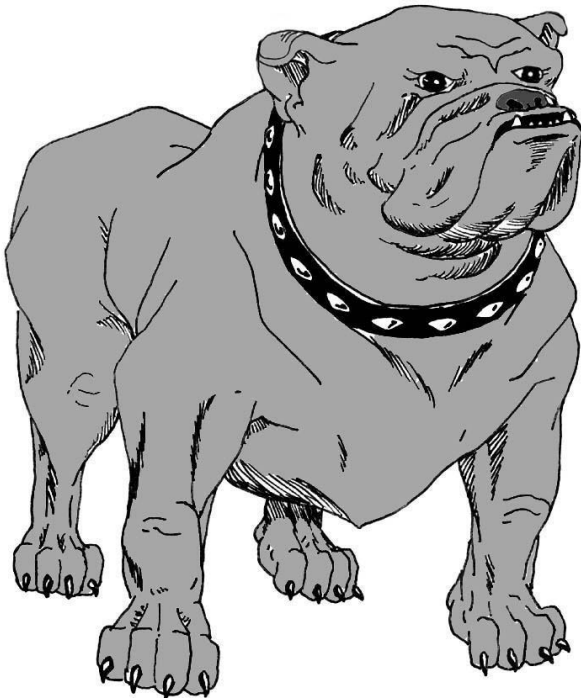
Most people have experienced intolerance in one form or another. If you have experienced intolerance, or know someone else who has, do you recall how the situation was handled?

Was the positive character trait of forgiveness used?

If not, how could forgiveness have helped?

Chew On This

“There is nothing wrong with you being you and me being me. As long as we continue to build a positive moral character and develop traits such as honesty, consideration, steadfastness and empathy, we can accept and help each other, regardless of our physical differences and be friends.”



What I Have Learned

- ☑ We are all unique human beings with the same desire to be needed, appreciated and respected.
- ☑ When all people of all nationalities, ethnicities, and languages begin accepting the differences of others, there will be no more excuses for intolerance.
- ☑ I can begin making a difference now by learning how to build a rapport with others.
- ☑ Taking the time to learn about different cultures and respecting the differences will lead to positive moral interaction. Interaction, when we are not judging others, putting others down, and when we accept our differences and look towards our similarities, will lead us to a place called appreciation and respect.
- ☑ Even when others show intolerance towards me, I am determined to be respectful and maintain a forgiving attitude.

“One of the most important ways to reduce intolerance is to regard others with the same care and compassion as you regard yourself.”



Enrichment Activities

1. Establish a penpal program from another country—Do research on some basic facts about the country where they live.
2. Select and research a country—its cultural practices, likes and dislikes. Incorporate the following questions into the report.
 - a. Why did you choose this particular country?
 - b. Would you need to learn a foreign language to live there?
 - c. What cultural practices are different than the ones you practice and why?
 - d. Is this a place you would like to live?
3. Do the “**Just For Fun**” activity on **page 41**.



Just For Fun

Unscramble each word and write it on the line.



1. onnticmiouma communication 7. ceacctenpa acceptance

2. ysiaitmilr similarity 8. ncleoretnia intolerance

3. tppaorr rapport 9. nainlyatito nationality

4. etcrluu culture 10. tithneyic ethnicity

5. reepstc respect 11. elniovce violence

6. caer race 12. erfnieecd difference



nationality	intolerance	culture	respect
ethnicity	violence	difference	rapport
acceptance	race	similarity	communication

Chapter Three

Positive Communication Leads To Healthy Interactions

Note To The Teacher

The ability to accept others of diverse cultures and beliefs is incomplete if we are unable to communicate with them in a way that is positive and effective. In fact, positive communication that is respectful, moral and considerate demonstrates an attitude of acceptance for all people, regardless of their diversity.

Poor communication, on the other hand, not only results in misunderstandings and hurt feelings, but also demonstrates an attitude of intolerance. Negative words, tone of voice and body language can belittle someone's worth and lead to interaction that is not conducive to positive moral growth and development. When we consider how our relationships, both personal and professional, are affected by the way we communicate, we can clearly see the value in teaching children how to effectively convey their needs and feelings.

In this lesson, students will:

- Learn what communication is and its importance in building quality relationships.
- Understand that by accepting others, we are more likely to communicate and interact with them in a more peaceful, considerate and effective way.
- Appreciate that positive communication leads to healthy interactions which in turn promote a more harmonious and unified way of life.

Unit Two

Lesson Plan

Positive Communication Leads To Healthy Interactions

PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

Students will learn what positive communication is. They will also learn how to communicate and interact appropriately to build positive moral relationships based on consideration and respect.

MATERIALS

- Students' handbooks
- Paper bag
- Copies from *Teacher's Manual*

PROCEDURE

1. Remind students that in the previous lesson, “**Accepting Diversity**,” they learned that a greater appreciation and value for others comes from taking the time to get to know them. Explain that stereotyping and labeling are based on generalizations. Share that it is important to accept others as unique individuals. Review the previous lesson by asking the following questions:

- a. What are some of the ways intolerance can be directed towards an individual? (*Answers will vary but may include: Saying hurtful things about a person's nationality, religious beliefs, mannerisms and style of dress.*)
- b. What are some examples of conflicts that were caused by intolerance? (*The Holocaust, the Civil Rights Movement and hate crimes.*)

2. Tell students that they will learn how to show acceptance for others through positive communication and healthy interactions. Ask them to read the “**Introduction**” found on **page 43**, then read the section entitled, “**Interaction and Communication**,” found on **pages 44-45**. Stress that we communicate with our words and actions. This is called verbal and nonverbal communication.

Communication is the avenue through which we interact with others. Explain that we communicate with ourselves by what is called self-talk. Reasoning within our minds or talking ourselves in and out of behaving certain ways is how we communicate with ourselves. Positive self-communication improves the way we communicate and interact with others.

3. Have students turn to **pages 47-48** and read the sections entitled, **“Be Careful Of The Messages You Send”** and **“Listening Helps Us Communicate.”** Tell students that we communicate and interact with each other with our words, tone of voice, facial expressions and body language. Explain that our true feelings and intent become apparent when all these facets of communication are looked at comprehensively.

4. Explain to students that listening is also an important part of how we communicate with others. Effective listening not only conveys acceptance but also reduces the possibility for misunderstandings and miscommunication. Have students turn to **page 49** in their handbooks and read the section entitled, **“Listening Is A Choice.”** Stress that listening is a skill that requires practice. Have students read and answer the questions in the section entitled, **“Are You A Great Listener?”** found on **page 50**. Discuss how poor listening skills affected the characters and their interactions with each other.

5. **Activity—Say It And Mean It:** This activity will allow students to gain an appreciation of the importance of our facial expressions and tone of voice when interacting with others. Prior to this lesson, cut and separate the cards found on **Lesson Plan 3 Page g** of the *Teacher’s Manual*. Ask volunteers to come to the front of the class and demonstrate the directions on the cards. Allow students to take turns drawing a card. After each demonstration, ask the class if the facial expression matched the words being said. Emphasize that our facial expressions will sometimes say what our words do not.

6. Explain to students that respect is also an important part of how we interact with others. Just as listening conveys respect, so too do our words and actions. Tell students that respect is conveyed when we treat others and their property with care and consideration. Have students turn to **page 52** in their handbooks. Read and discuss the section entitled, **“RESPECT.”** Emphasize to students that if they are ever unsure as to

whether they are speaking or behaving respectfully, they should stop and ask themselves if they would want others to speak to or treat them in that same manner.

7. Have students turn to the section, “**Building Relationships,**” found on **pages 53-54** and read about the importance of building positive moral relationships. Explain to students that healthy interactions are based on positive communication and respect. Healthy interactions, when nurtured, can lead to strong, positive moral relationships. Have students turn to **page 55** in their handbooks and read and discuss the section entitled, “**Negative Selfish Relationships Hurt.**” Have students read the scenarios on **page 56** and answer the questions that follow. Tell students that it is important to know the difference between a positive and a negative relationship. Stress that a relationship is only positive if both parties treat each other with respect and consideration.

8. Explain to students that hostile and devaluing interactions are a form of intolerance. Intolerance, in any form, has the potential to create conflicts between people. Emphasize that healthy interactions convey an attitude of acceptance. Stress that if others relate to them in an intolerant way, they must not allow themselves to be victims. They can seek help from a caring responsible adult.

9. Conclude the lesson by having students read the section entitled, “**What I Have Learned,**” found on **page 57** of their handbooks. Emphasize that healthy interaction results from positive communication with themselves and others. Healthy interactions, when nurtured, have the potential to develop into strong relationships that encourage us and help us to grow as moral individuals.

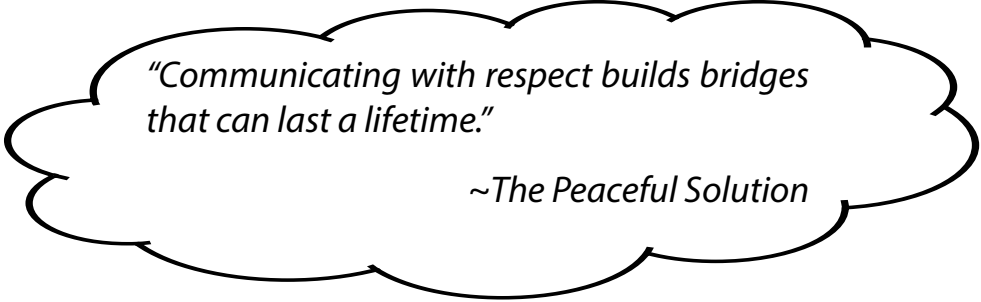
Unit Two

Say It And Mean It

Cut along dotted lines and separate cards.

With a smile, face the class and say, "How could you do something like that?"	Say, "I feel great," with your head bowed and in a sad voice.
Smile and then say, "I am very angry."	Clasping hands together and with smile on your face say, "that is the ugliest baby I've ever seen."
With a frown on your face say, "that was the best meal I've ever eaten."	With a cheerful look, wag your finger at the class and say, "Oh no you don't."
With an angry look, face the class and say, "what a beautiful gift!"	With a scared look, face the class and say, "you didn't scare me at all!"
With a look of joy, face the class and shout, "Stop!"	With a cheerful smile, face the class and say, "My puppy died."
With a frown on your face, tell the class, "You are so thoughtful."	Stomp your feet and frown while saying, "I am not angry!"
With a surprised look, face the class and say, "That doesn't surprise me!"	With a look of sarcasm, tell the class, "that is a really cool outfit you're wearing today."
With a look of sarcasm, tell the class, "Your hair looks really nice today."	With a look of terror, yell to the class, "Watch out for that car!"

Unit Two



"Communicating with respect builds bridges that can last a lifetime."

~The Peaceful Solution

Chapter Three

Positive Communication Leads To Healthy Interactions

Introduction

Unless you are the only inhabitant on a deserted island, at least 90% of your day is spent interacting, communicating and consequently building relationships with others. Needless to say, most people do not live on a deserted island. In fact, studies indicate that the majority of the world's population lives in cities. How we interact and communicate plays an important role in the quality of our relationships.

If you have ever said something that was misunderstood by someone then you know the problems resulting from poor communication. Poor communication can cause conflicts, hurt feelings, and can convey an attitude of intolerance. In the previous chapter you learned that intolerance in any form is negative and has the potential to cause resentment and animosity.

Communication is vital to our lives. If we are to be successful, we must learn how to communicate positively and effectively. Through positive communication, misunderstandings and conflicts can be avoided. In fact, how we communicate conveys our acceptance of those around us. In this chapter, you will learn that positive communication, interaction and mutual respect lay the foundation for all healthy, moral relationships.

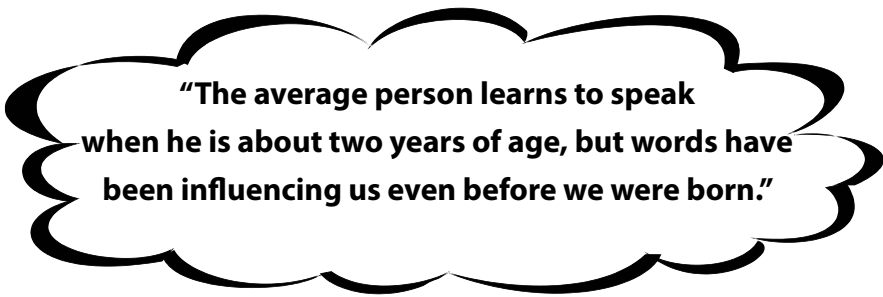
Interaction And Communication

Interaction simply means the way we affect and influence each other. Our most important means of interaction is communication. We communicate with each other both verbally and physically. Sharing our thoughts and feelings with each other is the basis of our communication. Could you imagine being joyful, sad, upset or scared and having no way to share that information with anyone? Imagine if you had no way to communicate or interact with your family or friends. Imagine not being able to use your facial expressions, hands or body to gesture with or your mouth to speak with. You would have no way of sharing any information. Picturing this gives us an appreciation for the ability to communicate and the importance it plays in our lives.

All About Words

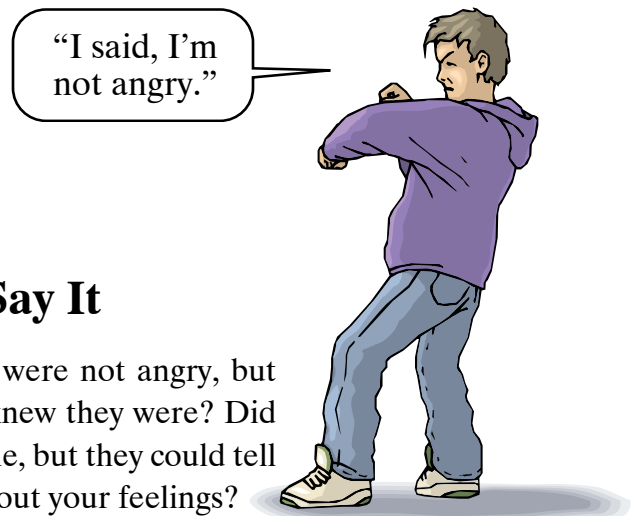
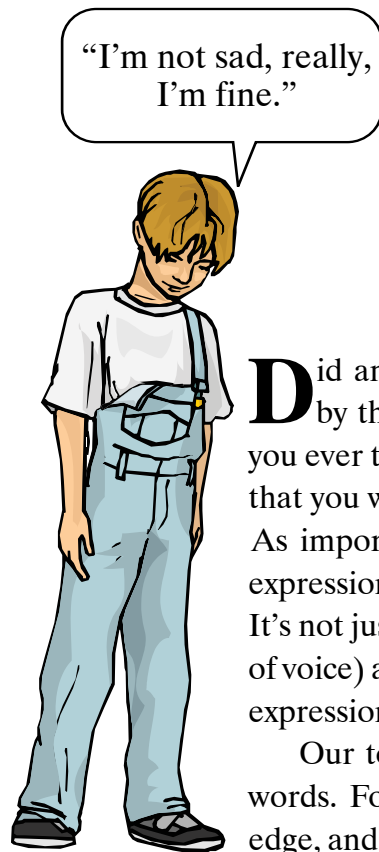
Words are powerful. They convey our needs, thoughts, feelings and consequently, our character. The words you speak can either show care and concern or they can embarrass, threaten and frighten others. In other words, whether you are honest or compassionate, deceitful or selfish, these are all indicated by the words you choose when communicating and interacting with others.

Verbal and written communication are important aspects of how we interact with others. The more words you are familiar with, the better you will be able to clearly express yourselves. Effectively using words when you speak and write will lessen opportunities for misunderstandings and miscommunication. So the next time you're given vocabulary words, study them and try to incorporate them into your every day conversations.



"The average person learns to speak when he is about two years of age, but words have been influencing us even before we were born."

Before the invention of the telephone, writing letters was the only means of communicating over distances.



It's How You Say It

Did anyone ever tell you they were not angry, but by the way they said it, you knew they were? Did you ever tell someone you were fine, but they could tell that you were not being honest about your feelings?

As important as words are, our tone of voice, facial expressions, and body language help to convey our true feelings. It's not just what we say (our words), it's how we say it (our tone of voice) and how we look and act when we're saying it (our facial expression and body language).

Our tone of voice reflects the emotional intent behind our words. For example, when you are angry, your voice has a harder edge, and will usually increase in volume. When we say the words "I love you," we say it with a softer voice, and in a caring way. If we are sad, our voices are usually lowered, less energetic and may have a quality of despair.

It's On Your Face

Our facial expressions also help to convey our true feelings. Have you ever heard the old saying, "actions speak louder than words"? Our emotions act out scenes on our faces. Have you ever looked at someone and knew that they were bored, joyful, sad, or angry? These, along with many other emotions, can be clearly read and understood through our facial expressions.



Body Language

Before sound was incorporated into film, the public relied on the actors and actresses to portray their feelings by their facial expressions and body language. There is still a form of entertainment which relies exclusively on one's ability to interpret communication through expressive body or facial expression. This is called pantomime.

Body language is another way we communicate our needs and feelings to others. Have you ever noticed that if people are sad, they slouch, if they're angry their bodies become tense; they may have clenched fists or tight jaws? On the other hand, when people are in a great mood they are relaxed. They smile readily and even the way they walk is cheerful.

If you are observant, you can tell all of these things about people by watching their body language. You can also tell if someone is interested in what you're saying if he leans towards you while you are speaking, as opposed to having his arms folded. Folded arms convey a lack of interest.

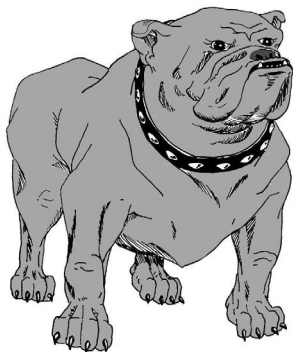
Be Careful Of The Messages You Send!

People can also use their body language to attract members of the opposite sex. Boys usually show their interest in a particular girl by acting “macho,” tough or cool. They tend to puff out their chests, flex their muscles and strut when they walk. Their body language says, “Hey, look at me, notice me!” Girls, on the other hand, tend to dress provocatively—short skirts, tight pants, tight shirts—and swing their hips to attract a boy’s attention.

Be careful of the messages you send with your body language because it says a lot about your character. What are you communicating when you try to encourage a member of the opposite sex to pay attention to you? Consider what it is you are saying about yourself when you walk and dress in a way that is meant to turn heads. People have been known to acquire negative reputations because of the way they dress and behave, especially around members of the opposite sex. Even though these acts send the wrong kind of message and always get undesirable results, they are nevertheless today’s trends.

On the other hand, modest clothing, that is not revealing, as well as proper conduct, can also reveal aspects of your character. It says to others that you respect yourself as an individual and that you expect members of the opposite sex to respect you, too.

Keep in mind that body language is visible to all who can see. If you are trying to attract one person’s attention by sending messages with your body language, who else’s attention might you attract? Inappropriate body language leads to unhealthy interactions. Be careful of the messages you send with your body... they can be read loud and clear.



“Even when you’re not talking, you may still be communicating.”

CHEW ON THIS!

“Listening is a skill that those who are wise will practice, develop and nurture.
Someone who is wise is quicker to listen than to speak.”

~*The Peaceful Solution*

Listening Helps Us Communicate

Learn To Listen

Did you know that listening is also one of the ways in which we communicate? That’s right. Communication is more than just talking. We show our acceptance of others and our willingness to interact positively, when we take the time to really listen to what others have to say. Believe it or not, listening is not as simple as it seems. Listening is actually a very important skill that has to be practiced.

Here Are Two Things You Should Never Take For Granted.

- **The ability to hear.**
- **The ability to listen.**

Hearing is one of the five senses that most of us are born with. Those who are born unable to hear or have limited hearing due to illness, or even accidents, communicate by sign language or by reading lips. Therefore, those of us who can hear should learn to listen to the best of our ability.

“Hear One!
Hear All!”



Listening Is A Choice

When we really listen to people we not only hear their words, but also their tone of voice. In addition, we observe their facial expressions and body language. In other words, we listen with our ears, eyes, and heart. This is called listening with empathy.

Listening with empathy simply means to listen to gain a true understanding of what you are being told. It means putting yourself in the other person's shoes and walking that mile with them. Not only is listening a choice, but it is an effective skill that will serve you well into your future.

To really listen to someone requires having the right attitude. You must want to hear and understand what that person is saying, so that there can be no misunderstandings. This requires your full attention.

Here are a few points to remember when listening:

1. **Do** repeat the intent of their words in order to ensure understanding of what is being said. For example, your friend may say, "My sister makes me mad, because she always ignores me when her friends are around." To show that you are listening and that you want to hear what she is saying, you might respond with, "It sounds as if you feel left out when your sister treats you that way." This type of response is called a reflective response because it reflects what the other person is feeling.
2. **Do** encourage them to speak by using encouraging phrases, such as, "Really?" "Did you have fun?" "Wow!"
3. **Do** listen with appropriate body language. Lean forward, and have a relaxed posture. Don't stand with your hands on your waist, or with your arms crossed. This gives the impression that you don't want to hear what is being said.
4. **Do** maintain appropriate eye contact. This does not mean staring at someone to make him or her feel uncomfortable. Having some eye contact conveys interest.
5. **Don't** interrupt what someone is saying just to give your opinion.
6. **Don't** change the subject in the middle of their talk with you, unless the conversation is inappropriate. This shows that you have no interest in what is being said and is also rude. It takes patience to listen to others.

Are You A Great Listener?

Read the following scenarios and answer the questions to see if you are a great listener.

a. Hector and Cory are on the same baseball team. One of the requirements to stay on the team is to maintain a B+ average in all their subjects. Hector was having trouble in one of his classes. He was really concerned about getting kicked off the team. After baseball practice, Hector told Cory, “I hope I pass this test. I really want to play in next week’s game.”

Cory replied, “Billy is your replacement and he can play really well, so even if you fail the test it will be okay.”

1. Was Cory listening? (No)
2. How do you think Hector felt? (Hector was very concerned about passing the test and staying on the team. Corey’s answer could hurt him.)
3. If you were Cory, what could you have said to show Hector you were listening? (I would have encouraged Hector, saying that if he studied, he was sure to do well on the test. I would also let Hector know that he needed to do his best in his classes so he wouldn’t have to worry about being removed from the team.)



b. Kyle and Byron have been friends since the fourth grade. Lately, Kyle has been having problems with someone picking on him. He tells Byron, “I hope he doesn’t follow me home. He keeps trying to get me alone so that he can take my money.”

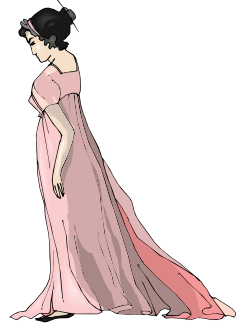
“Oh, don’t worry about it,” said Byron, “You don’t even have any money.”

1. Was Byron listening? (No)
2. How do you think Kyle felt? (Nervous, worried and frightened)
3. If you were Byron what could you say to show Kyle you were listening? (I would have encouraged Kyle to talk to a counselor or his parents to get the bullying to stop. I would walk home with Kyle to make him feel more secure.)

c. “My sister is getting married,” Jenny said with excitement. “I’m going

to help her pick out her dress and flowers.”

“Oh, that’s nothing,” said Lisa. “When my sister got married, I got to help her pick out her dress, flowers and help her choose the food for the menu.”



1. Was Lisa a great listener? (*No*)

2. How do you think Jenny felt? (*She was excited about all she was planning for her sister’s wedding.*)

3. What could you say to Jenny to show that you were listening?
(*I could have asked Jenny what color dress or what type of flowers she wanted.*)

RESPECT

Healthy interactions with others also means having mutual respect. Everybody wants respect. They want their feelings, dreams, thoughts and ideas, everything that makes them who they are, treated with care and concern. Everybody needs to know that they matter to someone else. Having respect for others and receiving their respect in return are ways in which we make our interactions positive.

The “Do’s” And “Don’ts” Of Respect

1. **Do use appropriate language.** Being angry is not an excuse to use foul language. Cursing shows a lack of self-control. So what if you can string the bleeps together. Cursing doesn’t solve anything. If you have a problem, use appropriate words to solve it. Don’t just stand there cursing. You have thousands of words at your disposal. Having a great vocabulary will give you more words to convey your feelings.
2. **Do not name call, put people down, or mock people.** Calling someone a name or using a racial slur does not explain how you feel. It causes hurt feelings and puts others on the defensive. Treat others the way you want to be treated.
3. **Do ask permission before touching or borrowing someone’s property.** Stealing can really affect the way people feel about each other. Where stealing exists, trust does not, and trust is necessary for positive interactions.
4. **Do not touch anyone in any way that makes him or her uncomfortable.** Touching someone inappropriately is called sexual harassment. In addition to touching, sexual harassment also involves making comments or suggestions of a sexual nature. It is disrespectful and conveys a lack of acceptance. It says loud and clear that someone is not worthy of respect. Aside from an unhealthy way to interact with others, it is also against the law and could get you into serious trouble. So, hands off.
5. **Do allow others to have their own opinions.** Even if someone’s opinion is different from yours, you can agree to disagree. If you do not agree with someone’s belief, you should still treat him with respect.

Bad scenes and hurt feelings are never forgotten. They are always like dark shadows between what could have been close friends.

“Don’t give respect to get respect.
Give respect because it is the right thing to do.”

~The Peaceful Solution

Building Relationships

A relationship is built when mutual interaction connects two or more people as belonging or working together. Although there are many types of relationships, they all result from communication and interaction. Some relationships are personal, while others are professional. A personal relationship involves two or more people who know each other well, and are comfortable around each other. The relationships that you share with your family or close friends are examples of personal relationships. A professional relationship is more formal. For example, the relationships you share with your teachers or boss are examples of professional relationships.



Rules! Rules! Rules!

Whether you are aware of it or not, all relationships, both professional and personal, have rules or guidelines that govern behavior and interaction. Many work places and most schools have a code of conduct that states that there must be verbal and physical respect for others at all times. Physical and verbal abuse, as well as sexual language or behavior, are inappropriate and prohibited. Relationships, such as those between teacher and student or doctor and patient, are professional and the rules governing their behavior are meant to keep people from being abused and mistreated.



When the rules that govern personal relationships are compromised, the result is also abuse that could range from verbal to physical and sexual. Sexual behavior between family members, for example, is not only immoral, but also devastating. It violates the bond of trust that must exist between members of the same family. Because parents or guardians are responsible for your safety and well being, their interactions with you must be appropriate at all times. To reach their full potential, all family members must have a safe and secure environment in which to grow. This can only be achieved when everyone interacts in a moral way and there is mutual care and concern.

You also have an obligation to follow the rules when interacting with others. Needless to say, you do not have the right to physically, verbally or sexually abuse anyone for any reason. You must demonstrate the same

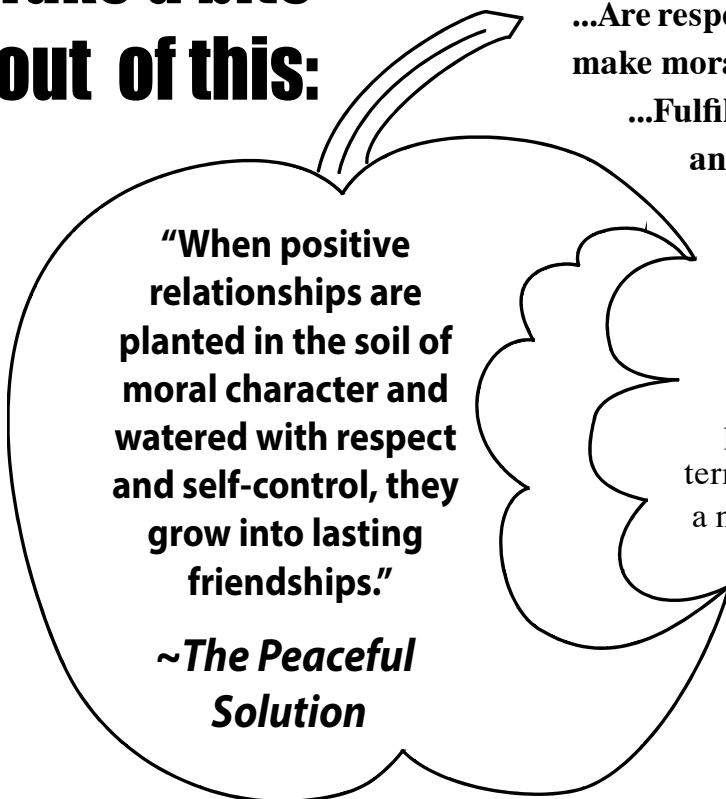
respect to others that you would want them to demonstrate to you. Do not take people for granted. For example, we sometimes assume that the people we know well, such as parents, siblings, and peers will not mind if we use or borrow their belongings without asking. Remember, unless someone gives you permission, you do not have the right to touch or use his or her possessions. So, as previously mentioned, always ask permission before touching, wait for an answer and then accept their answer to avoid conflict and hurt feelings.

Be respectful towards adults who have authority to guide and teach you, such as your parents, other family members or teachers. This means following directions the first time given, being humble when corrected, and doing all tasks to the best of your ability. Here's what it boils down to: Regardless of who it involves, keep all relationships, whether personal or professional, appropriate and respectful.

Just What Is A Moral Positive Relationship?

When people mutually follow the rules governing relationships and interact with consideration and concern, they are forming positive relationships.

**Take a bite
out of this:**



Positive Relationships...

...Are respectful and motivate you to make moral choices.

...Fulfill your need to be accepted and to belong.

...Allow you to politely voice your opinions, likes and dislikes.

Positive relationships play an important role in determining whether you develop a moral or negative character.

Be conscientious to treat others fairly and with respect. This shows value for life and that you have a positive moral character.

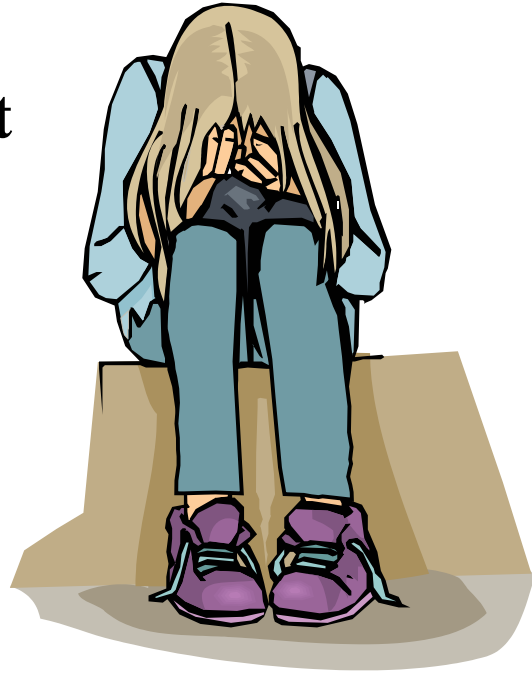
Negative, Selfish Relationships Hurt

Negative, selfish relationships, unlike positive, relationships of concern, are another form of intolerance. They can tear you down by devaluing your worth. Any relationship where you are abused verbally, physically, emotionally, or sexually is negative. These types of relationships can cause serious psychological damage, fear and distrust.

One example of a negative relationship is bullying. In elementary and middle schools, bullying has caused problems that range from low self-worth to violence and physical aggression. Often, people accept being abused or bullied because they think it will help them fit in with the crowd and be accepted; or, they think it is okay if their friends mistreat or abuse them. Be aware of anyone who uses violent acts, such as hitting, pushing or name-calling, then claims to be only joking. Being picked on, teased and physically abused are not things to laugh about.

Here's the bottom line: Abusive relationships are not funny and it is not the way people with a positive moral character would treat others. Allowing yourself to be abused will not help you to fit in. It will only make you a victim. If this is occurring to you, use the following suggestions to help you deal with your situation appropriately.

- **Do not downplay or ignore abusive treatment.**
- **Talk to someone you trust who will listen and recognize how serious your situation is.**
- **Never try to retaliate or get even. People with moral character will handle even the worst situation in a positive way.**



Read the following scenarios and answer the questions that follow.

1. Sheila and her friend, Val, were discussing how to spend their afternoon. “Well, I want to go to the mall. My mom is going and she said she would be glad to take us,” said Val.

“I don’t feel like going to the mall,” responded Sheila. “I know, how about the library?”

“What a stupid idea,” said Val. “Who in their right mind would want to spend their afternoon in the library?”

a. Based on this discussion, would you classify Sheila and Val’s relationship as positive or negative? (Negative)

Why or why not? (Val did not respect Sheila’s opinion.)

b. How do you think Val’s response made Sheila feel? (Val’s criticism of Sheila’s ideas most likely hurt Sheila’s feelings. She probably felt humiliated and embarrassed.)

c. People do not always agree, but how could Val have communicated her opinion in an appropriate way? (She could have told Sheila that she would rather go to the mall today and schedule going to the library another time, or she could have compromised and suggested another place that they both could agree on.)

2. Mark desperately needed to borrow his brother’s baseball for practice, but his brother, Jeremy, was not at home. Mark decided to take the baseball, use it and return it before his brother got home. However, during practice, Mark hit the ball out of the park and into the lake. Having no other choice, he had to tell his brother that he had taken the ball without permission. After listening to Mark, Jeremy patiently explained, “Being brothers does not give you the right to go into my room and take whatever you want. I need to know that I can trust you to respect my belongings just like I respect yours.” Mark apologized and offered to use his next allowance to buy a new baseball for Jeremy.

a. Did Mark’s brother communicate his feelings appropriately? Why or why not? (Yes, he made his feelings known and was respectful towards his brother’s feelings. He did not call him names or put him down for taking his ball without permission.)

b. How did Jeremy’s response enable the situation to be resolved appropriately? (By treating his brother respectfully, his brother was able to apologize and work out a solution.)

What I Have Learned

- ☑ Communication is the basis for our interactions.
- ☑ Positive communication with others involves using words respectfully and having appropriate facial expressions and body language.
- ☑ Even my ability to listen improves my interactions with others.
- ☑ Body language can send messages just as loudly as if I were speaking.
- ☑ Positive communication leads to healthy interactions and strong relationships.
- ☑ Understanding positive moral relationships will enable me to make wise choices that will help me avoid being mistreated by others.

“With respect, care and mutual concern, relationships can be morally positive.”



Enrichment Activities

1. Prepare two speeches of about one to two minutes each. One speech is clearly given, the other is unclear and muddled. Discuss the importance of speaking clearly.
2. Via pairing, roleplay a scenario of speaker and listener. Instruct the “speakers” to talk for two minutes about a subject that they feel deeply about. For example:
 - a. Plans for their future.
 - b. A situation that made them feel sad or joyful.
 - c. Something that made them feel angry.

Instruct the “listener” to assist the speaker by using reflective, encouraging responses like, “Wow!” “Really? Tell me more.” They must also convey interest in what the speaker is saying by having appropriate facial and body language. After two minutes, pause and allow some discussion of how the students felt in their roles. Did the listener feel comfortable implementing the listening skills? Did the speaker feel as if he or she were really being heard? After the discussion switch roles and repeat the process.

3. Do the “**Just For Fun**” activity on [page 59](#).





Just For Fun



Find the hidden words in the puzzle below.
Answers are vertical, horizontal and diagonal.

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

WORD LIST

positive
negative
character
communicate
words
influence
thoughts
feelings

conversation
voice
listening
messages
interactions
hearing
talking

respect
language
rules
relationships
verbal
nonverbal
vocabulary

needs
tone
facial
emotions
meaningful
choice
understand
empathy



Chapter Four

The Importance Of Friends And Friendships

Note To The Teacher

The importance of friends and friendships cannot be overstated, neither can the need to choose friends who display moral character be minimized. Although the need for friendships is never outgrown, its significance is magnified in the lives of our children. It is at this most crucial time when they need to feel accepted by their peers, that friendships matter most of all. Millions of children, however, lack the socialization skills and confidence to develop friendships that are supportive and positive. Children are often so starved for acceptance that they would rather be victimized, bullied and made the butt of cruel jokes than face their school years without a friend.

Because friends play such an integral role in the lives of our children, it is imperative that they are taught how to recognize a true friend. Without this knowledge, children can become bullies and take advantage of others or become victims of bullying. They can also be pressured into making choices that can negatively affect them for the rest of their lives.

In this lesson, your students will:

- Learn how to develop and maintain friendships that are based on positive moral character.
- Be able to differentiate between positive and negative influences.
- Appreciate that positive communication and interaction build relationships that blossom into lasting friendships.
- Understand that true friendships can improve their lives and give them a sense of acceptance and belonging.

Unit Two

Lesson Plan

The Importance Of Friends And Friendships

PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

Students will learn the importance of friendships. Students will also learn how to motivate their friends to develop and maintain a positive moral character.

MATERIALS

- Students' handbooks

PROCEDURE

1. Review with students the previous lesson entitled: **“Positive Communication Leads To Healthy Interactions”** by asking the following questions:
 - a. Why is it important to have healthy interactions with others? (*Interacting in a healthy way shows acceptance and opens the doors to building strong moral relationships.*)
 - b. What is the basis of healthy interaction? (*The basis of healthy interaction is positive communication, which involves words, tone of voice, facial expressions, actively utilizing listening skills and body language.*)
2. Tell students that they are going to learn how positive communication results in healthy interactions and builds lasting friendships. Explain to students that friends are very important to us. They give us a sense of belonging and reinforce our positive characteristics. Have students turn to **page 61** of their handbooks and read the section entitled, **“Introduction.”**
3. Explain to students that because friends play such vital roles within our lives, it is important for us to know how to select the right friends. A right friendship is one that demonstrates mutual respect, concern and moral character towards each individual involved. How can we know in advance whether the friendship

we are seeking will benefit each party? Have students turn to **pages 62-63** of their handbooks and read the article entitled, “**What Is A Friend?**” After reading the article, have them turn to **page 64** and complete the activity. Allow a few students to share what they wrote, as time permits.

4. Tell students that everyday interactions are the foundation from which they choose their friends. Explain that even though they have intentions of getting to know someone, that person may not respond in a way they would like. Have students turn to **page 65** of their handbooks and read the section entitled, “**Barriers To Forming Friendships.**” Remind students that even though some may reject their desires to be friends, they should continue to maintain their self-worth and positive moral character; and, always be polite to others, no matter how they are treated. Ask students how it feels to be rejected by someone they want to become friends with. (*Answers should include hurt, sad, embarrassed, disappointed.*) Explain that those are normal feelings, but there are ways to help you deal with rejection. Have students turn to **page 66** and read the section, “**Here Are A Few Helpful Ways To Deal With Rejection.**”

5. Ask students to describe what it means to conform to something. Take a few answers, then ask students if they think they are influenced by their friends in any way. Have students turn to **pages 67-69** in their handbooks and read the section, “**Who, Me? Conform?**” Emphasize to students to be careful of who they allow to influence them. They need to maintain positive moral character traits regardless of what others around them choose to do.

6. Tell students that often people form a mental picture of how they think someone is going to be before they get to know the person. When they do this, they prejudge the person to fit into a particular category. Explain to students that this can affect who they choose to be friends with. Have students turn to **pages 70-71** in their handbooks and read the section entitled, “**Generalizations: Stereotyping & Cliques.**” Remind students that it is important to be willing to accept the differences of others and show proper respect.

7. Tell students that sometimes people go to extreme measures to make friends and to fit in. Bullying, criticizing and putting others down are some of the negative ways people try to earn friends. Emphasize that bullying is wrong. Have students turn to **pages 72-74** of their handbooks and read the section, “**Bullying Is Bad News.**” Stress that if anyone is being bullied

they should tell an authority figure in order to stop the bullying. Under no circumstances should they retaliate. Emphasize that retaliation will only make the situation worse.

8. Tell students that once they find someone they would call a friend, they must continue to work on the relationship. It takes time and work to maintain a friendship. Ask students to turn to **pages 75-76** and read the section entitled, “**Maintaining Friendships.**” Have them then turn to **page 77** and read the scenarios and decide what choice to make. Remind students that it is normal for friends to find themselves in a disagreement. Tell them to take the Friendship Quiz found on **pages 78-80** and choose the answer that will best maintain a friendship.

9. Conclude the lesson by instructing students to read the section, “**What I Have Learned,**” found on **page 81**. Emphasize to students that everyone needs and wants to have friends. Stress to students that it is important to accept people for who they are. Remind students that true friends encourage and support each other to make right choices. Tell them to never give up on making friends. The best way to make a friend is to learn how to become a true friend by practicing values that they learn from this character education program.

Unit Two

"Positive moral interactions can make friends out of enemies."

~The Peaceful Solution

Chapter Four

The Importance Of Friends And Friendship

Introduction

Do you know what can occur when you develop and maintain communication and interaction with others? You can form strong, lasting friendships. Interaction where there is mutual respect for others and their possessions results in opportunities to get to know, appreciate and value someone to the point where you can call him a friend. Having friends who share the same moral principles, who are compassionate and caring towards others, gives us a sense of belonging and creates a feeling of acceptance.

Having close friends to share your ideas with, as well as life's ups and downs, can make a big difference in how you feel about yourself and the world around you. So who do you consider as friends, is it your parents, siblings, peers at school or neighbors? Like most people, you probably distinguish between family and friends, but the truth is, family members can be friends and friends can become as close as family. What determines true friendship with anyone is how you interact and communicate with them. This determines the quality of a friendship.

In this lesson, you will learn the importance of friendships. You will also learn that the most important thing friends can do is to encourage and motivate each other to make choices that will support their positive growth and development.

“Real friends encourage you to do what is right.”

~The Peaceful Solution

Who Is A Friend?

A friend is one who supports, respects, encourages and accepts you as a unique individual. Friends can come in all shapes and sizes, and from all walks of life. Friends can come from all nationalities and ethnicities. It’s important not to cut yourself off from getting to know someone because they are different. Keep in mind that no two people are exactly alike. We are all unique human beings who share more similarities than differences.



Choosing Friends

The importance of choosing positive friends cannot be overstated. People with immoral principles and negative character as friends can influence you to make choices that you could regret for the rest of your life. Learning to recognize the qualities that make a positive friend takes time and effort. Avoid meeting someone and immediately deciding to accept this person as a friend. Take your time to learn about him or her first. Remember, just because someone has a great personality does not mean they have a positive moral character. When choosing friends, keep these things in mind and proceed with wisdom and caution.



Deciding To Be Friends

Is there someone you think you would like to be friends with? The following stages of interaction will help you decide if that person will make a perfect friend.

①

Observation Stage. Observe that person's interaction with peers and adults. How someone treats others, especially when he is antagonized or frustrated, says a lot about his character and personality. Be careful of those who are easily angered or take out their frustrations on others by being hostile, aggressive or violent.

②

The Introductory Stage. Once you have observed that person to be respectful and well mannered, you may choose to introduce yourself. Through conversation you can learn more about each other. Talk about current events, your likes and dislikes. Keep your conversation respectful and appropriate.

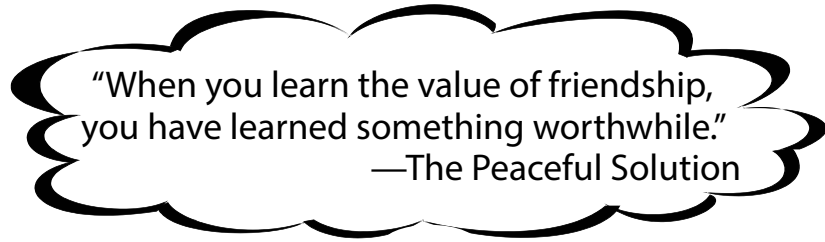
③

The Getting-To-Know-You Stage. Listen carefully to what your potential friend says. What does he or she believe about moral principles? If your potential friend tells you that cheating is okay or that for fun she goes to the mall and shoplifts, then red flags should be going up. These are clear signals that you should proceed with caution. Try letting that person know that stealing is wrong. Tell them why. Explain the conflicts that it causes.

④

The Deciding Stage. Carefully consider if you want to pursue a friendship with someone who is dishonest or cheats and steals. It is a proven fact that you will be known by the company you keep. Someone who lacks moral principles can influence you to make wrong choices. It would be wise to decide to make friends only with people who have positive moral character. In this way, you will be influenced to make right choices.

The decision to build a friendship must be mutual. You must both want to be friends, because true friendship is never one-sided. For example, a true friend will never expect money or gifts from you for being your friend. The truth is, you cannot buy friendship. If you find yourself giving away your belongings or money to keep your friends, then stop. Here is a cold hard fact: anyone who expects you to buy his or her friendship is not your friend. True friendship comes from the heart. It requires commitment, respect and concern for one another.



Fill out the following information about one of your friends.

Name _____

How did you meet him or her? _____

At what point did you realize that he or she was a friend? Was there some special incident that occurred to bind your friendship? Write about that incident. _____

Write a paragraph about what you value in a friend. What positive character traits do you think a friend should have? Why?

Barriers To Forming Friendships

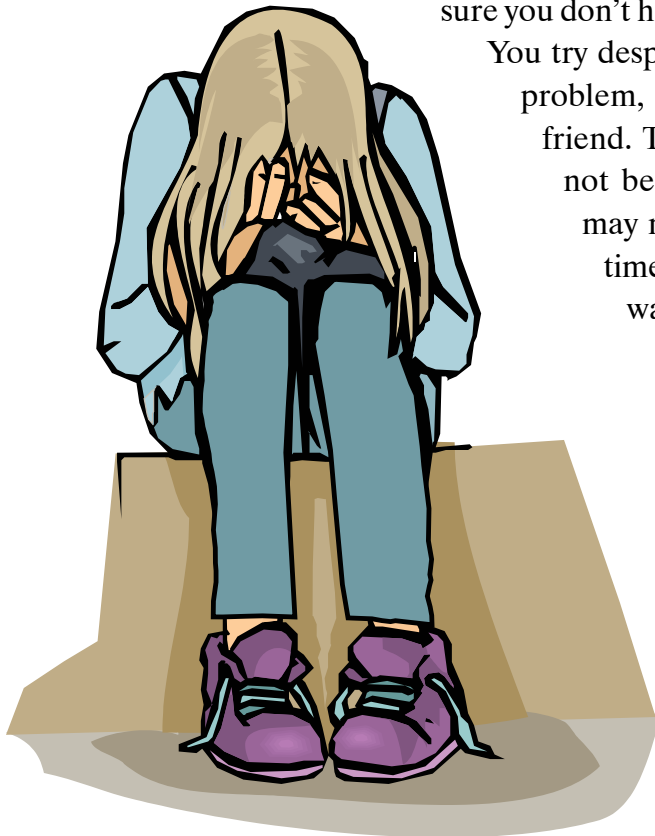
As you grow and mature, you will have more interaction with others and greater opportunities to choose friends. By now, you have most likely experienced some disappointments in making friends. The truth is, finding positive friends can be a matter of trial and error. Sometimes you will have to face a few obstacles or barriers, but by accepting that these barriers exist and dealing with them in an appropriate way, you can make positive friends and be a positive friend to others.

When Friendships Don't Work Dealing With Rejection

As hard as you may try, the person you want to be friends with may not want to be friends with you. Accepting that your personalities are not compatible or that the other person is not interested in your friendship can be pretty hard to deal with. Dealing with rejection is never easy. You may even question your sense of self-worth. You may ask yourself questions such as: “Why doesn’t she like me?” or “Why doesn’t he want me on his team?” or “What’s wrong with me?” You may even

do a quick breath check, or check the mirror to make sure you don’t have something stuck in your teeth.

You try desperately to find a way to solve the problem, so that you can be this person’s friend. The truth is, your personality may not be the problem. The other person may not be the problem either. Sometimes things don’t turn out the way you want them to, and as hard as that may be to accept, it really is just a part of life. The most important thing is to find ways to deal with rejection that will not cause you to feel depressed, or cause you to hurt yourself or others.



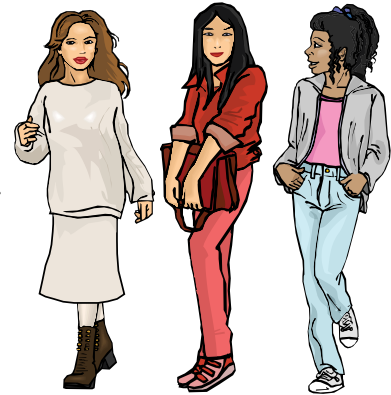
Here Are A Few Helpful Ways To Deal With Rejection:

1. **Remember the stages of interaction.** Keep in mind that there are stages leading up to friendship. Until you both decide that you want to be friends, you are simply getting to know each other. You feel rejected because you assume the other person feels the same way you do.
2. **Remember that there are other fish in the sea.** There are over six billion people in the world. If you practice treating people with respect and follow what you have learned in *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*, you will gain many friends.
3. **Continue to value your positive moral characteristics.** Being the best that you can be does not mean that everyone will appreciate you. Often, when people feel rejected, they decide that in order to fit in and earn friends they have to change their positive moral character and personality. **DON'T DO THAT!** Real friends will appreciate your positive moral characteristics and accept you for who you are and for what you stand for.
4. **Don't feel like you have to get even with someone because they reject you.** Remember you learned that one example of a healthy interaction is respecting someone's right to their opinions. Accept that people will form their own opinions about you as they learn what you stand for. You shouldn't be concerned about trying to make others like you. The most important thing is to have a positive moral character which you display towards others at all times. Others, many others, will learn of you and will desire your friendship.

*“You can be just as great a friend to yourself
as you are to someone else.”*



Who, Me? Conform?



Sometimes when making friends, you may find yourself conforming or changing the way you think, act or feel in order to fit in and be accepted. Because friendships are based upon shared similarities, likes and dislikes, some conforming will naturally occur. For example, all your friends like a certain designer shirt. Soon, all your friends have similar designer shirts. Owning this shirt has now become a standard for your group of friends. If you then decide that you must wear the same kind of shirt, then you have conformed to the same standard.

One of the most common forms of conformity is called peer pressure. Peer pressure is when you feel like you must behave in a certain way in order for your friends to respect you or see you as an equal. Peer pressure can be either positive or negative.

It's Always Right To Conform To Something Morally Positive And Beneficial

Conforming to positive moral standards that help to build positive character causes no harm to yourself or others. Positive conformity encourages you to make moral choices.

Positive Conformity Is When You:

- Are encouraged to obey proper authority.
- Keep yourself and others safe.
- Are encouraged to support and practice moral values.

For example, you and your friends have permission to go to the fair. While there, some of your classmates you've always wanted to hang out with approach you and invite you to join them in the parking lot for a few beers. You really want to be accepted by them. You decide to go, but your friends talk you out of it, reminding you that drinking at your age, is against the law, and if you get caught you can get thrown off the fairgrounds, and escorted home by the police. Your friends also remind you that your parents trusted you to go to the fair and stay out of trouble. Realizing that they are right, you say, "no" and stay with the friends you came with.

You do not need to compromise positive morals or character for the sake of friendships. In fact, you can have even better friends by practicing the lessons learned from *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* and standing firm on true values and positive moral character. However, if you recognize that you have conformed to something wrong, it is okay to change and conform to something positive.

You are urged by *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* to become a leader yourself in guiding others to safety and teaching positive morals and character. Then you will have many loyal friends.

Negative Conformity Is When You:

- Are encouraged to disobey a proper authority figure. We should only disobey authority who asks us to do wrong.
- Compromise your safety or the safety of others.
- Go against moral values that you have set your mind to follow.

Conforming to negative moral values can result in making bad choices that could have terrible lifelong consequences. For example, your parents give you permission to visit your friends. While at your friend's house, some other friends invite you to come to a "cool party." When you walk in, you realize that everyone is smoking pot and getting drunk. Not wanting to feel left out, you join them. Within less than an hour, there is a knock on the door, and the police enter the house. Everyone is arrested, including you.



“Negative conformity is not the path to choose.

If you follow this path, you will hit a dead end.

Don't follow the crowd in doing wrong.

Stand up, speak out to all with a positive voice.”

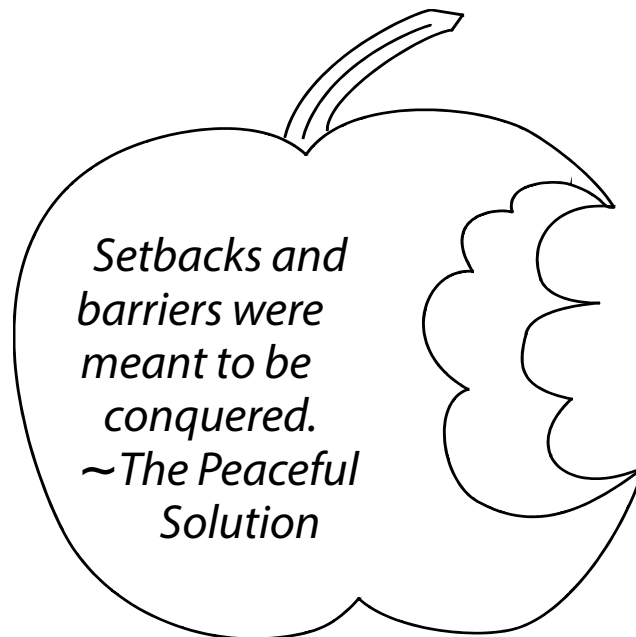
~The Peaceful Solution



When it comes to conformity and friendship, remember, you have a choice. Just because you are friends with someone does not mean you have to agree with and accept everything he or she says. Now that you know the difference between positive and negative conformity, you can use this knowledge to make intelligent decisions about what you will or will not do for the sake of friendship.

As important as friends are, what is even more important is to make choices that show respect for yourself and others. If someone tries to talk you into doing something you know is wrong, stand up for what you know is right, even if it costs you your friendship. A true friend will realize the importance of making right choices and will respect you for your decisions. In addition to this, a true friend will admit that he was wrong and thank you for helping him stay on the right track. He or she may even be interested in knowing how you became so firm in your moral characteristics. Wouldn't that make you feel great?

Take A Bite Of This



Generalizations: Stereotyping & Cliques



Sometimes fitting in and being accepted means finding the group of friends that you are most comfortable with. Wanting to be around those who share similar interests and values is normal, but it does not change the fact that we are individuals. Even though it is a fact that no two people are alike, there are those who form opinions and make statements about others that make it appear that specific groups of people are alike in certain ways. These statements are called generalizations and they are usually nothing more than someone's opinion that is made to sound like a fact.

Generalizations are usually inaccurate and unfair. Here are some examples of common generalizations:

- Blondes are “dumb,” “silly” or “dizzy.”
- Athletes are “dumb jocks.”
- Smart or studious people are “geeks.”

Needless to say, these statements are untrue. They are also cruel and are meant to hurt and devalue. In addition to this, generalizations can lead to labeling and stereotyping. A label is a word or phrase that is used in place of the name of a person or thing. Jocks, geeks, nerds and thugs are examples of labels that are frequently used to describe people who look or act in a certain way. You are already familiar with the negative effects of stereotyping others from chapter two, “Accepting Diversity.” Did you know that because of generalizations, people within your own culture and within your own schools are stereotyped? Some common examples of stereotypes are “all tall, black, young men like basketball” or that “girls are not as smart as boys.” How do you think stereotyping and labeling others would affect your ability to interact and communicate? If you believe a generalization about someone, will you be more or less likely to get to know that person?

These questions help us to realize the dangers of generalizations, stereotyping and labeling. If we believe these unfair and cruel ideas about others, it will negatively affect the way in which we relate and the effort we are willing to put forth in getting to know them. Generalizations create barriers to getting to know people for the unique individuals they are.

People tend to automatically identify with those who share the same hob-

bies and interests. For example, someone who is a cheerleader is more likely to make friends with others who are also cheerleaders because they practice together and have a common bond. However, if you exclude others from your circle of friends because they are not cheerleaders, then you are well on your way to forming what are called “cliques.”

Cliques can also pose barriers to developing friendships. They can be exclusive and unaccepting of those who are different or do not fit a particular mold. Cliques encourage conformity, because you must be willing to change your way of thinking and behaving in order to fit in and be accepted by other members of the clique.

Read the following article about cliques, stereotyping and labeling.

School Cliques: Are You In Or Out?

By Samantha Tay

Everyday, when I walk through the halls of my school, I see the sports jocks, the “hot” babes, the “plain Janes,” the geeks, the loners, the troublemakers, the list is endless. Why is it like that? And how can I, or any other teenager, fit in this crazy world of cliques we call school?

Some teens think cliques are just a normal part of school and give a sense of security and belonging. If you have a clique, you have a place where you belong.

But others say that cliques force you into being like everybody else. “To me cliques are just a way of conforming and fitting some mold. That’s really the only purpose they serve,” says Claudia, 19.

At their worst, cliques can isolate people, making some teens total outcasts, while others rule the school. In some schools, many teens say some cliques in their school definitely have the power. “I don’t like to admit this, but the ‘Pias Kias’ and the ‘Perfects’ join together and reign over everyone else,” says Jamie.

So what can we do? Some teens say they reject cliques and have different groups of friends. I say, instead of fearing what other people think, be brave, say hello to someone who is walking alone down the hallway. Invite somebody to sit with you, if they don’t seem to know anyone.

There is so much more to people than the stereotypes we give them. I think life would be so much simpler if we could all accept one another and praise our uniqueness.

School Cliques: Are You In Or Out?,
www.geocities.com/editorinsig/sch.htm



Bullying Is Bad News

Did you know that there are some people who actually take pleasure in hurting others? They have yet to learn The Peaceful Solution, which means showing respect for one another and having healthy interactions to build lasting friendships. Instead, they steal the rights of others to be safe and rob people of the opportunity to make friends. They are called bullies. It is common knowledge that bullying is a problem in schools today.

If you are the bully, think about your actions. Choosing to belittle or hurt others for fun or just because you can, is cruel. Picking on, teasing and physically assaulting someone can affect him or her for life. Guess who else it will affect? You! Studies done on adults who bullied others as children prove that they regretted and were ashamed of their actions. Many of them longed to go back in time and change the way they treated others.

Hurting someone is a no-brainer. It takes far more intelligence to interact in a positive, healthy way. Don't wait until you have grown up to realize that your actions are hurting others. You can change your behavior and begin to interact with empathy and concern now. You will earn far more respect by showing consideration and compassion for others than by being cruel and disrespectful. You will also have the satisfaction of knowing that your friends like you because of your personality and character. They would probably want to be around you, instead of avoiding you. Years from now, you will be able to look back on your childhood and not be ashamed of the choices you made in regards to how you treated others.



If you are friends with someone who bullies others, ask yourself what drew you to him or her in the first place. Were you afraid of being bullied or do you think it's exciting being around someone who is feared by others? Even if you never raise a hand or say a word to hurt someone, just the fact that you hang around someone who chooses to hurt others reflects upon your character. Have you ever heard the saying "guilty by association"? Well, by supporting someone who intentionally hurts others, you too are guilty of bullying. Consider the choices you are making in regards to who your friends are. Then be courageous. Speak up and do not continue to support someone who hurts others.

Simple Solutions For Dealing With A Bully

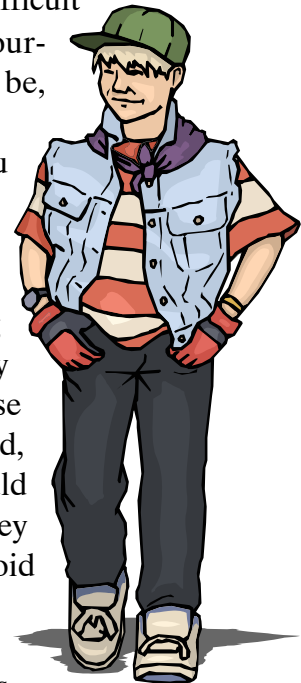
If you are the victim of a bully, then you are facing a difficult and challenging stage in your life, but do not give up on yourself or on people in general. As difficult as these times may be, they will pass.

You must determine not to allow how others treat you to change your positive moral character. Studies show that when people are mistreated there is a tendency to either take advantage of others or take revenge against those who are intentionally cruel. Both of these are poor choices. Bullying someone because someone bullied you will not change the way you are being treated. You will only be causing someone else to suffer in the same way. No one deserves to be mistreated, not you or anyone else. Always treat others the way you would want to be treated. Normally, this will shame bullies and they will simply avoid you. One thing is for certain, it's best to avoid them. You don't want to add them to your list of friends.

Retaliation in any form will only make the situation worse. Too many young people who were the victims of bullies chose violence and aggression as ways of getting even. They end up taking the lives of not only the ones who were tormenting them, but also of those who had not hurt them in the least. In addition to this, they forfeit their own lives by either suicide or face life imprisonment for their crimes. Do not let this occur to you. Studies have proven that adults who were the victims of bullies agreed that learning to let go of their past, rather than dwelling on it, enabled them to accept that although there are people who take advantage of and mistreat others, there are also people who are kind and compassionate. This has enabled them to lead successful lives.

Here are some suggestions to help you cope if you are in a situation where you are being bullied.

1. **Try your best to ignore the bully.** Walk away and find an adult in authority. Ignoring such unacceptable behavior is powerful. You may find yourself in this situation over and over. When you choose to ignore the continuous remarks and actions and choose not to react, the bully will eventually get discouraged and leave you alone. The bully will search for someone whose "buttons" he or she *can* push.
2. **Be determined to treat people the way you want to be treated.** Never retaliate or verbally attack the bully or others with him or



her. This is only fuel for the fire. Let your example work on others involved by making them feel uncomfortable with what the bully is saying or doing.

3. **Seek counsel and guidance.** Don't be ashamed or embarrassed that you are being bullied. You have no reason to be ashamed. It is the bully who should be ashamed, not you. Talk to an adult who is in authority. If they won't listen or help you, keep asking until you find someone who believes you and is willing to help you find a peaceful solution. Don't suffer in silence. You don't deserve to be treated that way; no one does.
4. **Don't give up on yourself or others in general.** If you are in a situation where you are being bullied, you may separate yourself from everyone because of shame or fear. You may even feel that no one is your friend. Don't give up. There are true friends waiting to get to know you, it's just a matter of time. Don't judge everyone by the cruel behaviors of a few. Use the skills you developed from the last lesson in positive communication to meet people who have positive moral character and seek a new friend.

Helpful Hints To Protect You And Your Friends From Being Bullied

- Do not carry a weapon; it could be used against you, plus it's illegal.
- Retreat from the bully, if possible.
- If cornered, speak in a firm, positive manner.
- Do not appear timid or scared.
- Do not physically attack the other person.
- Do not stand around watching others get bullied, get help.
- Talk with classmates about agreeing that bullying is not cool.
- Promote programs and discussions about bullying.
- Make it a point to deal with conflict in a nonviolent manner.
- Learn about conflict resolution, peer mediation and anger management techniques.
- Get assistance from school counselors.
- Help make your school environment a place where it is acceptable to be kind.

Maintaining Friendships

Rejection, conformity, bullying and cliques are all problems that can arise as we interact and form relationships. When you consider these problems, it helps us to be more appreciative of the people we can call our friends. Despite all of these barriers to developing true friendships, you can still learn to choose friends that are positive, moral and supportive. Once you have found true friends, the next important step is to maintain your friendships. Of course, maintaining friendships cannot be one-sided. Everyone involved must value the friendship and work at remaining friends.

Maintaining friendship begins with mutual respect and commitment. There are many ways that respect can be shown. For example, asking permission before using or even touching your friend's belongings and accepting his answer, even if it is, "no," is an important aspect of maintaining friendships. Remember that saying 'no' is also your right. It's something that we all desire for ourselves as well as others. You can also be polite. Simple acts of courtesy, such as saying "please" and "thank you" to your friends, as well as not interrupting them when they speak, are all ways you can demonstrate respect.

Another important aspect of maintaining friendships is to show appreciation for your friends. Do not assume that they will know you care about them if you never show it. There are many ways to show that you care. This can be as simple as actively listening to a problem and offering positive ways to deal with it. Appreciation can also mean taking the time to give a compliment. A few kind words can go a long way in maintaining a friendship, as long as there are no selfish desires behind those caring words.



Even In The Best Of Friendships...

Even in the best of friendships, individual likes and dislikes can cause conflicts or disagreements. If not handled appropriately, disagreements will result in hurt feelings, anger and resentment. Maintaining your friendships does not mean always agreeing or going along with what your friend suggests, because even best friends will not see eye-to-eye all the time. Differences can be resolved as long as both parties are willing to follow just and right rules as studied from *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*. It is important that you both maintain a positive moral character.

Conflicts within friendships can usually fall into two categories, those that are based on individual preferences and those that are based on moral principles. If you and your friends disagree over personal preferences, remember to be respectful of their feelings. Don't put them down because their ideas are different from yours. Use self-control and humility to keep the problem from getting out of hand. Simple words such as, "I apologize," "I was wrong," if you were wrong, or "please," can really cool things down when arguments heat up. Holding onto anger, hostility and resentment can destroy the best of friends. Stop and consider what is really important, winning a petty argument or practicing your skills in communication, self-control and humility. Look for ways to compromise so that each person's needs are met and no one feels like their ideas or opinions are rejected.

Keep in mind that the most important aspect of maintaining a moral character within positive friendships is to stand up for what is right. So, if you and your friends disagree over issues that are based on moral principles such as honesty, respect and responsibility never compromise, even for the best of friends. If you do not stand for what is right, you can fall for anything. By standing firm on a moral decision, you will not get pressured into doing something you will regret. You can also, by your example, encourage and motivate your friends to make choices that are moral as well. It is far better to separate from someone that you once thought was a friend than to compromise your true moral values.

Consider the following scenarios. Decide if you should compromise or stand firm on your decision. Explain your choice on the lines provided.

1. Your friend tries to talk you into taking money from your mother's purse to rent a video game. He said that if you don't, he won't be your friend anymore. Should you compromise? Why or why not? (No, because you know that it is wrong to steal, and you will not compromise your integrity for a friendship.)

2. You get permission to visit your friend. While at your friend's house you decide you want to go for a walk. Your friend wants to watch a movie instead. It is a movie that you are allowed to watch. Should you compromise? Why or why not? (Yes, you both have needs that you want met. If you compromise, you can do both, watch the movie and then go for a walk.)

3. Your friend tells you that he has been invited to this "cool party" with lots of beer and no adults. He also mentions that he can invite one person and he has chosen you. Should you compromise and go? Why or why not? (No, you could get into trouble for being at a party like that when you are underage.)

4. Ann and her sister share a room. Ann really likes the color green and her sister really likes the color blue. Both get permission to paint their room but Ann's sister says she absolutely refuses to live in a green room. Should Ann compromise? Why or why not? (Yes, both need to compromise and pick a color they both like.)



STRAIGHT TALK

There may be times when choosing to uphold a moral principle may cost you a friend; but, if someone will give up on your friendship because you choose to do what is right, then he or she wasn't much of a friend to begin with.

Choosing to uphold a moral decision or compromising over personality differences demonstrates positive character and leadership skills. This can improve the quality of your life and of your friendships. Keep in mind that being a great friend means making choices to be considerate and respectful every time you interact. Test your friendship I.Q. to see if you need to improve on your friendship skills.

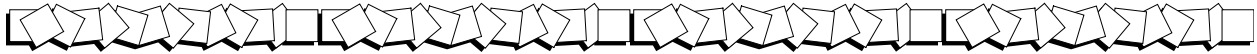
Test Your Friendship I.Q.

Read the following scenarios and choose the answer that will maintain a friendship.



1. Your friend has a collection of baseball cards that are valuable. He is very particular about them and does not allow anyone else to touch them. While visiting him one afternoon, he leaves the room. You:
 - a. Quickly pick up the cards and begin looking at them. After all, what he doesn't know won't hurt him.
 - b. Respect his request, whether he is there or not.
2. Your friend keeps making fun of your new haircut, even though you have asked him several times to stop. You:
 - a. Start making fun of his big nose, after all, you did ask him to stop.
 - b. Explain to him that you don't appreciate his comments.
3. Your sister keeps her diary under her bed, but she doesn't know you know where it is. While taking laundry to her room you decide to:
 - a. Quickly take a peek, after all, how else are you to know what is going on in her life?
 - b. Leave the diary alone and respect her privacy.
4. You plan with your friend to rent a movie. When you get to the video store, you can't agree on what movie to rent. He likes scary movies, but you would rather watch comedies. You decide:
 - a. To say, "I'm not going to watch that stupid movie. I should have asked José to come over instead of you."
 - b. To compromise and suggest a suspense movie instead.





5. Your friend has been home sick for several days. You:
 - a. Ignore her, forgetting all about her. After all, out of sight, out of mind.
 - b. Give her a call just to cheer her up and let her know you were thinking of her.

6. Your dad has given you permission to go to the game with your friend, after you complete your chores. Your friend comes over to wait for you and:
 - a. Walks around your house getting into things he doesn't have permission to get into.
 - b. Asks if he could lend you a hand so you won't be late for the game.

7. Your mother baked a batch of your most loved cookies and gave you instructions to share them with your friend when he came over. You:
 - a. Put them away thinking you could eat them all yourself after he leaves. After all, he won't miss what he didn't know he had.
 - b. Do what your mother instructed, knowing your friend enjoys cookies as much as you do.

8. Your friend is upset and calls to share her news with you, but you just got the best news of your life. You:
 - a. Interrupt her and tell her this is the best day of your life.
 - b. Wait patiently and listen. It's obvious she needs a listening ear.

9. You find out that your friend has a bad habit of being late. When he didn't show up on time again to work on a school project you:
 - a. Yell at him for being late and decide you can get even by being late to his house next time.
 - b. Are patient with him, suggesting that he get a watch to keep better track of time.

10. You tell your friend something that you wanted kept a secret. You find out later that she told someone else. When you asked her why she told someone, she apologizes and explains that she did not know you wanted it to be a secret. You:
 - a. Tell her that she is a horrible friend and never speak to her again.
 - b. Forgive her. After all, everybody makes mistakes.



So how did you do? “A” answers indicate that you need to improve your friendship skills. To keep a friendship positive and to make friends feel appreciated, you must be careful to respect their possessions and their feelings. Start working on improving your friendship skills today. Do not wait until tomorrow. If you continue to treat your friends poorly, by tomorrow you may lose a really great friend. Seriously consider the way you treat others. Be honest and ask yourself, how would you want to be treated? Then interact with the same patience and consideration that you would want from others.

“B” answers indicate that you are a great friend. You are kind, respectful, generous and compassionate. When you interact with others using these positive character traits, you can turn acquaintances into friends and make friends out of enemies. Continue your positive interactions. Your life can only be improved and enriched when you form positive moral friendships.

A Few Reminders For Maintaining Friendships

- ☺ Be considerate in all your ways. Consider how your actions will affect others.
- ☺ Lend a helping hand. Be willing to pitch in and help when the need arises and it is appropriate to do so.
- ☺ Share the ups and downs of life. In other words, keep the lines of communication open.
- ☺ Spend time together. As friends, you will share mutual hobbies and activities.
- ☺ If you live far away, send a card or e-mail with a few positive words that will encourage and motivate.
- ☺ Don't forget to mention *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* to your friends.

What I Have Learned

- ☑ One aspect of healthy interactions is developing and maintaining friendships based on positive moral character.
- ☑ Having friends is an important part of my moral growth and development.
- ☑ Finding true lasting friendships is a process that requires commitment, compromise, patience, and accepting *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*.
- ☑ I will be known by the company I keep. Therefore, I must be careful when choosing my friends, making sure that they, too, desire positive moral character.
- ☑ A true friend is positive, moral and will support and encourage me.
- ☑ A friend is someone I can have fun with, easily talk to, accept me for who I am, and will help me make right choices and teach others the same.
- ☑ Excluding, labeling, and stereotyping others are wrong. I need to get to know someone based on their character and personality because these are the qualities that true friendships are based on.
- ☑ There are skills I can use that will enable me to have healthy interactions with others and build relationships that can last a lifetime.



Enrichment Activities

1. **Getting To Know You:** Pair up with someone you really don't know very well. Interview each other using the activity sheet found on page 83. Share with the class what you learned about your partner.
2. Choose an extracurricular activity that involves a group of people that you would enjoy spending time with.
3. Learn a new hobby that is taught to a group of people.
4. Think of something special to do for a friend to let him or her know how much you appreciate them.
5. Do the **“Just For Fun”** activities on pages 83-85.



Just For Fun

Activity #1

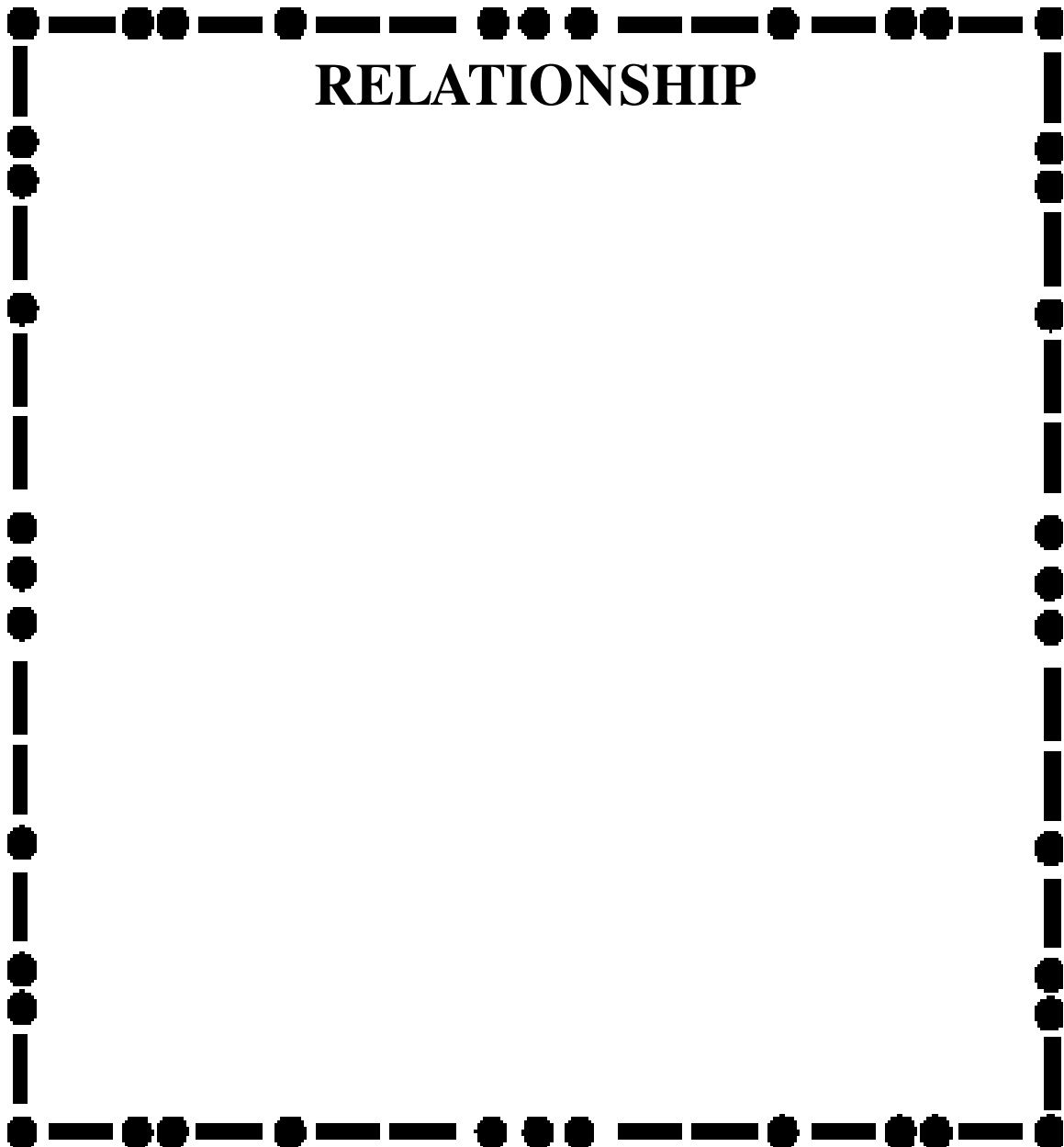
Pair up with someone in the class that you don't really know and ask the following questions in order to get to know him or her.

1. What is your full name?
2. What do you like to be called?
3. How old are you?
4. How many brothers and/or sisters do you have?
5. Where were you born?
6. What are your talents?
7. What are your hobbies?
8. What are your likes and dislikes?
9. Name one goal you have.
10. What is your best liked subject at school?
11. What do you want to do after you graduate?

Just For Fun

Activity #2

Being friends is a relationship. Below is the word relationship. Using only the letters in this word, without repeating any letters in any one word, see how many words you can make in five minutes. Proper nouns, abbreviations, hyphenated words, and words with apostrophes are not included. There are more than a hundred words with three letters or less. See how well you can do!





Just For Fun

Activity #3



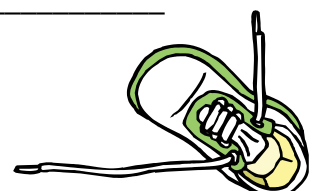
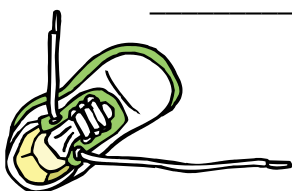
The word list shows some qualities of being a friend. Find them in the puzzle below. Answers are forward, backwards, sideways and diagonal.

- | WORD LIST | |
|---------------|--|
| honest | |
| patient | |
| kind | |
| trustworthy | |
| friend | |
| loyal | |
| brave | |
| loving | |
| caring | |
| faithful | |
| true | |
| responsible | |
| genuine | |
| moral | |
| forgiving | |
| steadfast | |
| respect | |
| understanding | |
| encouraging | |
| companion | |
| joyful | |
| wise | |

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

How many more characteristics describe a true friend? Write them below. How many of these qualities do you possess? Being a friend is a relationship that takes work. With work, you can have all the attributes of a true friend, too.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



Chapter Five

There Is A Purpose To It All

Note To The Teacher

One of the saddest experiences of teaching is to see students with potential, who are bright and promising, fall prey to negative conformity and peer pressure. However, without the understanding that their lives have meaning and purpose, an increasing number of children are making choices that rob them of their futures. In our fast-paced society it is no longer shocking that the number of children who become pregnant in their early teens is growing and that alcohol and drug addictions continue to plague our youth.

As educators and role models, we can no longer be satisfied with teaching just the core subjects. When we consider that the HIV infection is growing fastest among people between the ages of fifteen and twenty-one, it becomes painfully evident that our educational system must do more. We must work together to combat the overwhelming number of negative influences that perpetuate our children's inability to make moral choices.

In this lesson, students will:

- Understand that they can develop meaning and purpose in life by assisting others.
- Learn that their purpose in life is far more profound than choosing a career or gaining wealth or fame.
- Appreciate that having purpose in life separates those who succeed from those who succumb to negative conformity and life-shattering choices.

Unit Two

Lesson Plan

There Is A Purpose To It All

PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

Students will learn what it means to have purpose in life. Students will also learn that to achieve their purpose, they must be determined and focused. They must also distinguish between positive and negative conformity.

MATERIALS

- Cassette player
- *Teacher's Manual Audio Lessons* cassette
- Students' handbooks

PROCEDURE

1. Review the previous lesson, **“The Importance of Friends and Friendship,”** by asking the following questions:
 - a. Who is a friend? (*A friend is someone who supports you, respects and encourages you to practice positive moral behavior and accepts you as a unique individual.*)
 - b. What positive traits should you look for in a friend? (*Someone who exhibits positive moral character traits, who is a great listener, and who is respectful.*)
2. Tell students they will learn that there is a purpose to the life of every person. Tell students they will also learn that having purpose in life will help them avoid conforming to negative standards. Have students turn to **page 87** in their handbooks and read the **“Introduction.”**
3. Explain to students that in order to understand that their lives have purpose, they must first recognize that they can make a difference in and contribute to the lives of others. Tell students that when they contribute their time and abilities to help others, they can have a positive effect in the lives of their families, friends,

society and some day, even the world.

Have students turn to **pages 88-89** in their handbooks to the section entitled, **“Helping Others = Value And Worth.”** Ask students to list a few of the ways they help others. Explain to students that their contributions, regardless of how small they may seem, can mean a great deal to someone else.

4. Explain to students that each person must determine their specific purpose in life. We often make this determination based upon influences, likes, dislikes, strengths and abilities. For example, they may be influenced to help bring peace to the world because of an awareness of the many wars and conflicts around the world. Or they might have seen a show about how pollution is affecting our atmosphere. This may influence someone to want to help save the environment. On **pages 91-93**, **“Where There Is Meaning There Is Purpose”** have students read the sections and complete the worksheet.

Tell students that some people determine their purpose in life while they are quite young. For others, it takes longer. Emphasize that until they do determine their specific purpose, they need to continue developing a positive character and making right choices. Have students read the **“Just So You Know”** section on **page 94** in their handbooks.

5. Remind students that in the last lesson they explored various aspects of conformity. Tell students that accepting negative standards can diminish their purpose in life. Stress that although we all need friends, we must be careful of the friends we choose and how we spend our time. Have students turn to **page 95** in their handbooks to the section entitled, **“Friends, Conformity And Purpose.”**

6. **Activity #1—Positive And Negative Choices:** Ask students to turn to **page 97** in their handbooks and categorize the following activities, choices and character traits into either the column entitled, **“Positive Choices”** or the column entitled, **“Negative Choices.”** Discuss with students the need to be aware of how they spend their time and who they spend it with. Allow students to evaluate how they spend their time by answering the questions found on **page 98** in their handbooks. Remind students that how they choose to spend their free time is something they do have control over, so spend it wisely.

7. Explain to students that friends can influence how they spend their

time and the choices they make. Emphasize that as they become more determined to achieve their purpose in life, they should not allow others to negatively influence them to stray from that course. Encourage students to acknowledge their ability to make right choices and not give in or be swayed to do something they know is wrong. Have students turn to **page 99** and read the section entitled, **“Test, Prove And Stand Firm.”**

8. **Activity #2—Narrative: It’s A Matter Of Choice:** Play the narrative entitled **“It’s A Matter Of Choice”** found on the *Teacher’s Manual Audio Cassette*. Have students turn to **pages 100-103** in their handbooks and follow along then answer the questions that follow. Stress that having a purpose is the first step towards achieving success.

9. **Activity #3—Poem: Life Is A Journey:** Play the poem entitled, **“Life Is A Journey”** found on the *Teacher’s Manual Audio Cassette*. Students may follow along on **page 104**. Discuss with students that life may not always turn out like they expect. Emphasize that the more focused and determined they are to achieve their purpose in life, the more meaning life will have for them.

10. Conclude the lesson by having students turn to **page 105** and read the section, **“What I Have Learned.”** Tell students that they can avoid conforming to negative standards by acknowledging that their lives are significant. Stress to students that having a purpose in life helps them to make a right choice when faced with a decision to conform to a negative standard in order to fit in or feel accepted.

Unit Two

"Potential in our youth, without moral direction and purpose, is much like a derailed train."

Chapter Five

There Is A Purpose To It All

Introduction

To have purpose in life means to have a positive direction in which to grow and mature. Knowing your purpose helps you to know what you want to do with your life. How can you tell if there is purpose in someone's life? Look to see if they are motivated and determined to accomplish things. People with purpose strive to learn all they can about a particular subject so they can know best how to proceed. This requires education, not just in a classroom, but also in real-life situations. It is up to you to determine your purpose and to make choices that will help you succeed in achieving your purpose.

Unless you understand that your life has purpose, you can easily dismiss the effect that you have on the lives of others. Without an appreciation of just how significant you are to your family and friends, you may begin to feel as if your life has no direction or value. Never think of your life as meaningless, unimportant or useless. Everyone has something to offer and contribute to the lives of their family, friends and society as a whole. You can do whatever you set your mind to do.

In this lesson, you will explore that there is value and purpose in life. Standing on the firm foundation of your purpose demonstrates that you accept your life as worthwhile and meaningful.



Helping Others = Value And Worth

Have you ever considered how many people you know and see on a regular basis? Your family, friends and teachers are only some of the people you communicate and interact with daily. What effect do you have on each other's lives? By consciously making an effort to willingly help and share knowledge with others, you can improve their lives and give meaning and purpose to your own.

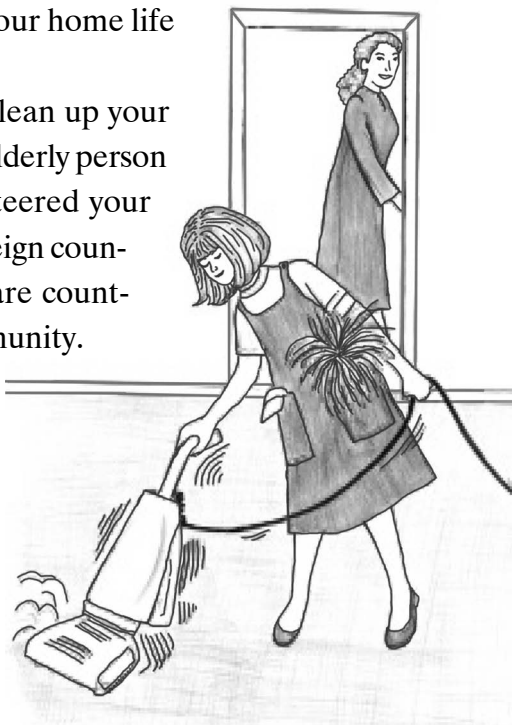


When was the last time you took stock of the ways in which you were helpful? Do you assist your parents or other relatives by doing chores or babysitting younger ones? If your family is like many other families in today's society, then both of your parents probably work during the day, or maybe you live in a single parent family where the

responsibility of providing for the family rests upon one person. Regardless of the size of your family, parents and guardians have many obligations and duties. As a young adult, you have the ability to contribute to your family's well-being. It may seem as if you are only taking out the trash or doing the dishes, but by doing your chores with a pleasant attitude and to the best of your ability, you alleviate some of the stress from your parents and help to make your home life pleasant, clean and healthy.

Have you ever taken part in a drive to clean up your neighborhood or shovel the sidewalk for an elderly person after a snowstorm? Maybe you have volunteered your time to teach English to someone from a foreign country, or read to the blind or elderly? There are countless ways you can assist others in your community.

However, it is up to you to educate yourself about the relevant issues in your area. Ask your parents for permission to get involved. Then ask your teachers or principal, as well as other community leaders about ways that people your age can be of assistance.



Think about it. If everyone waited for someone else to pitch in and help, nothing would get done. So take the initiative and be generous with your time. Get involved in extracurricular activities, especially those that will build your awareness about what is going on in our society and our world. Then do what is within your power to help.

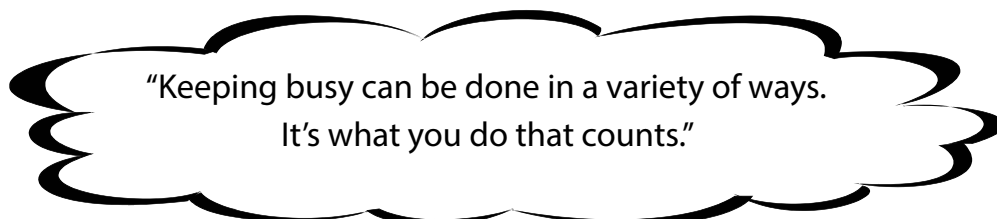
Do not underestimate or belittle the time and energy you spend helping your family and community. Considering the needs of others and putting others first will help to give meaning and value to your life and the lives of others.

The following are some examples of ways in which you may already contribute to your family and community:

mowing the lawn	tutoring	food drive
baby-sitting	neighborhood clean up	doing laundry
shoveling snow	cooking supper	

Using the above examples and other ways not listed, fill in the chart by listing ways in which you would like to help others.

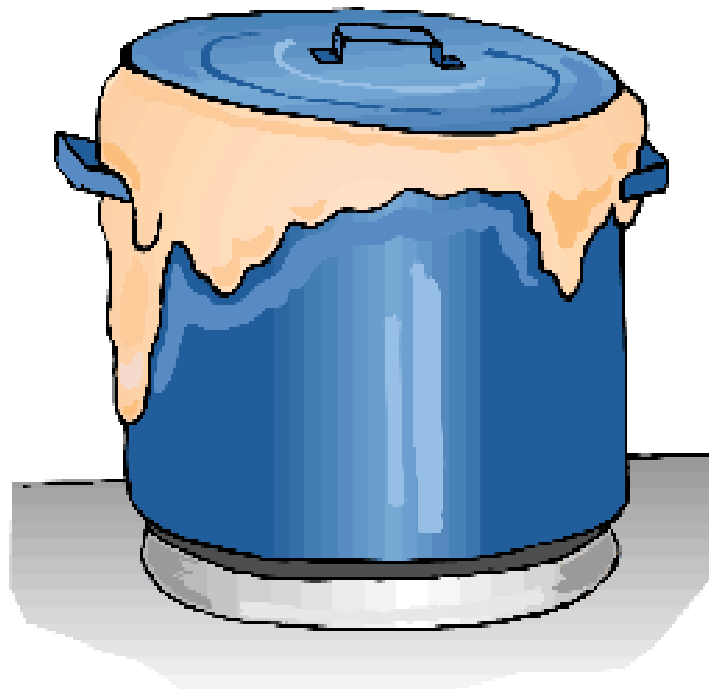
<u>HOME</u>	<u>SCHOOL</u>	<u>COMMUNITY</u>
<i>mowing the lawn</i>	<i>tutoring</i>	<i>babysitting</i>
<i>shoveling snow</i>		<i>neighborhood clean up</i>
<i>doing laundry</i>		<i>food drive</i>
<i>cooking supper</i>		



What It All Boils Down To

“Ordinary people think merely of spending time. Great people think of using it.”

“Life is more than watching TV and playing video games! It’s up to you to decide to do something more meaningful with your time... The choice is yours.”



WHERE THERE IS MEANING THERE IS PURPOSE

Another important aspect of accepting that your life has meaning is to determine what your purpose in life is. Everyone's life has purpose. Yes, everyone! The problem is that people sometimes get caught up in "the daily grind." In other words, they begin to see their daily activities and functions as routine, boring or monotonous. They fail to realize that their interactions are helpful. They may become disappointed and frustrated and tend to have a, "Life is boring. I deserve to have some fun, besides I don't have much of a future, so I might as well live for the moment" attitude.

Without purpose, these people are more susceptible to taking unnecessary risks that could lead to experimentation with drugs, alcohol or premarital sex, putting themselves in danger of deadly sexually transmitted diseases. In many ways they give up on themselves and their future. Don't let this occur to you. Keep in mind that your life, like everyone else's, is meaningful and has purpose, but it is up to you to determine your purpose.

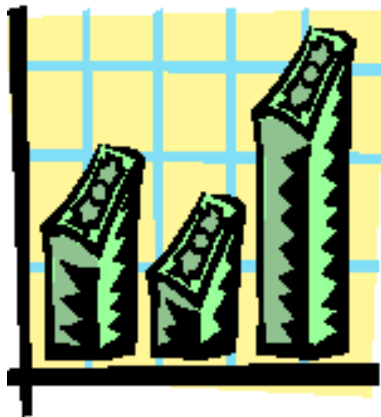
Determining Your Purpose

Many people wonder at some point in their lives what the future holds for them. If you too have ever wondered who you are and what your purpose is, then join the crowd. Were you meant to play a significant role in world events, to set new records, or be the inventor of technology that could revolutionize our world?



Time, education and determination can answer those questions. Meanwhile, understand that having purpose in life does not necessarily mean changing world events or becoming rich and famous.

Do not confuse purpose in life with having a prestigious career, wealth or fame. The majority of people in the world are not famous or wealthy. They are simply ordinary people who improve our society and



our world by treating others and their possessions with respect, compassion and consideration. In fact, one of the greatest purposes that anyone can strive for is reaching their full potential by developing and maintaining a positive moral character and by pursuing a sound education. Remember, knowledge is powerful. By simply making this decision you have already taken a major step towards success.

Keep in mind that deciding what you want to do with your life may not come overnight. Recognize your purpose can be a combination of experiences and influences. Take into consideration issues and subjects that you care about. For instance, you see a documentary about children who are physically, sexually and emotionally abused and you are so moved by the plight of these children that your purpose becomes helping stop child abuse. Or, by watching the world news you become aware of some of the conflicts around the world. By doing further research you decide that someday you would like to help stop the violence in our world and help bring about true peace. When these thoughts do come to mind, don't forget that educating the world in *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* will stop all of the above and more. It will actually bring peace to your world and to the world around you.

Evaluating your character will also help you to determine your purpose in life. This means taking a long, hard, honest look at your actions

and behavior towards others. For instance, character traits such as compassion and consideration for others, as well as respect for life and the environment, indicate that you care about people, animals and our world. There are many positive choices you can make for your life with these attributes. In addition to this, evaluating your abilities can also help you to determine the best direction for you to grow towards. For example, do you have leadership abilities? Do you communicate well with others? Are you skillful with your hands or are you a quick learner? Do you like to study? By choosing the right books to study, you can build your knowledge to the point of being all that you desire. You can also help others to do the same.

By making use of what is offered in *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*, you will not only have knowledge, but you will gain the wisdom to use your knowledge for the betterment of all mankind.

Your experiences, influences, abilities, interests and character all help you to determine your purpose in life.

Here Are Some Basic Examples Of Purpose:

- To bring peace to the world.
- To stop the abuse of animals.
- To relieve human suffering.
- To improve the environment.

Answer the following questions to determine what your purpose in life might be.

1. What are some of your character strengths? _____

2. What are some of your abilities? _____

3. What are some issues that concern you? _____

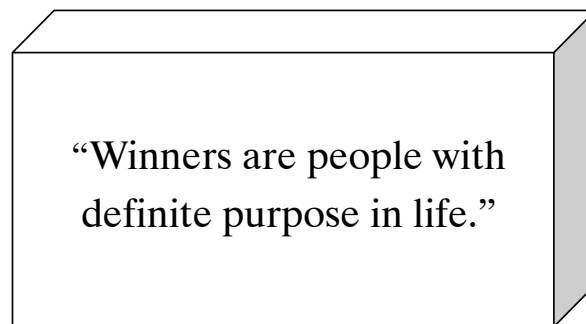
4. Based on your character strengths, abilities and concerns write a statement about what you think your purpose in life is. _____

Just So You Know

If you are like most people, today you want to stop the abuse of animals, tomorrow you want to end starvation and provide homes for the homeless. As you grow, you will have a variety of influences that could affect what you hope to do with your life. For example, you meet someone who is in the field of social services. Not knowing what that term means, you ask for an explanation. Based on the information you receive, you think, *hey, that sounds pretty neat, I think I would like to do that type of work.* Your purpose becomes helping people as a social worker and making a difference in the lives of many.

Just by speaking with one person about a subject, the whole focus of your life can change. So, you must be careful who you get advice from and not be too quick to obligate yourself until you get all the facts. You can get advice from those who are trustworthy, honest, and responsible for their actions. In other words, they have positive moral character and they set and achieve positive goals. Be smart and consider how your influences can impact your future.

In the meantime, don't get frustrated if you cannot decide what your purpose is or if you keep changing your mind. What is important is to always have a positive direction in which to focus your attention. In this way, when you are faced with peer pressure and other negative influences, you can have a reason to stop, think and evaluate how your choices will affect your future. Someone who wants to put a stop to world hunger won't get talked into abusing drugs or abusing alcohol that could impair his judgment and his ability to think clearly and make safe choices.

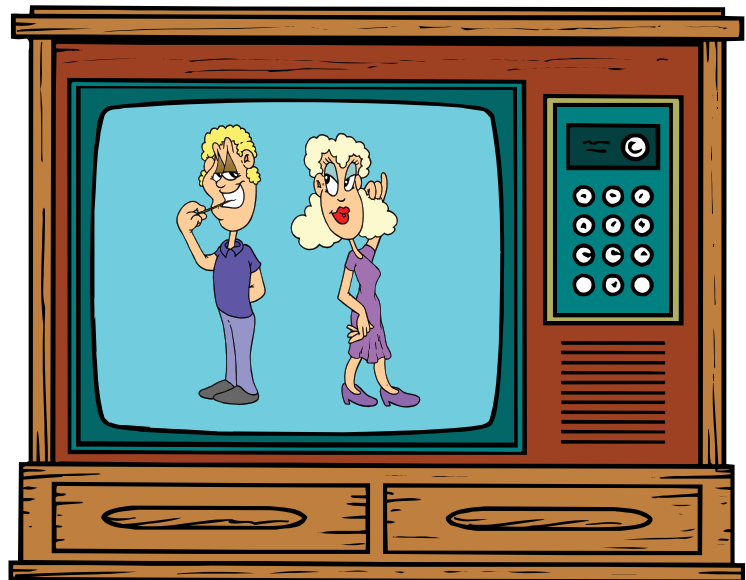


Friends, Conformity And Purpose

Once you have identified your purpose in life, don't stop there; you must also be focused on achieving it. This means being careful of how you spend your time alone or with friends, as well as being aware of what you conform to. Without focus and determination, you can lose sight of the positive things you want from life.

Think for a moment about what you spend your free time doing. Is it racing to the computer as soon as you get home to play the latest game or is it watching hours and hours of TV?

Although there are TV shows that are positive and video games that appear harmless, the vast majority of these forms of entertainment are filled with illicit sex and violence. When your main sources of entertainment are TV and video games, you could begin to view violence as an acceptable way to handle anger. As for sex, based on what is seen on TV, it appears that “everybody is doing it” without any negative consequences. In real life, the consequences of having sex outside of marriage can result in STD's that can both affect you for the rest of your life, and give you a bad reputation that could follow you for years to come along with a negative self-image that could affect the way you relate to and interact with others.



conformity as: *to agree with and obey the customs and standards of others.* The attitude of “everybody is doing it” is a form of negative conformity that stems from our need to fit in and be accepted as “normal.” Negative conformity can derail you from your purpose. In addition to the pressure to engage in premarital sex, there are many different ways that people take part in negative conformity.

The need to please friends is certainly one of the most powerful reasons why people conform. For example, how do you spend your time when you are with your friends? Studies indicate that a popular pastime for adolescents between the ages of twelve to fifteen is hanging out at the mall talking about and laughing at people as they walk by. Many of the teens surveyed said that they would not feel comfortable doing this if they were by themselves. But with friends, they set aside their sense of right from wrong because everybody else is doing it.



There are many other types of activities that are done with friends, as a means of conforming and fitting in, that are negative and have the potential to influence you to make poor choices. Keep in mind that every choice you make including how you spend your time and what you conform to, can affect your ability to develop a positive character. If you do not carefully consider what you are conforming to and how you spend your free time, alone or with friends, you could jeopardize your ability to achieve your purpose by making choices that are irresponsible, selfish and disrespectful. Negative conformity can waste your time and your future.

Identifying Conformity

The following activities, choices, and character traits can either help you achieve or hinder your purpose in life.

Categorize the list below into the appropriate columns.

- | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| thinking positively | disobeying rules | provocative dress |
| obeying rules | shoplifting/stealing | helping others |
| taking drugs | being responsible | bullying |
| staying in school | joining a gang | sex before marriage |
| prejudice | being honest | respecting the privacy of others |
| abusing alcohol | cheating | gossiping |
| staying a virgin | being steadfast | violent entertainment |
| getting an education | modest dress | following instructions |
| bad language | self-control | smoking |

POSITIVE CHOICES	NEGATIVE CHOICES
<i>obeying rules</i>	<i>taking drugs</i>
<i>following instructions</i>	<i>shoplifting/stealing</i>
<i>thinking positively</i>	<i>smoking</i>
<i>self-control</i>	<i>joining a gang</i>
<i>being responsible</i>	<i>bullying</i>
<i>staying in school</i>	<i>prejudice</i>
<i>helping others</i>	<i>disobeying rules</i>
<i>being honest</i>	<i>abusing alcohol</i>
<i>staying a virgin</i>	<i>bad language</i>
<i>being steadfast</i>	<i>cheating</i>
<i>respecting the privacy of others</i>	<i>provocative dress</i>
<i>getting an education</i>	<i>gossiping</i>
<i>modest dress</i>	<i>violent entertainment</i>
_____	<i>sex before marriage</i>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Write on the lines below what you typically spend your free time doing. Is it negative or positive? Then answer the questions that follow.

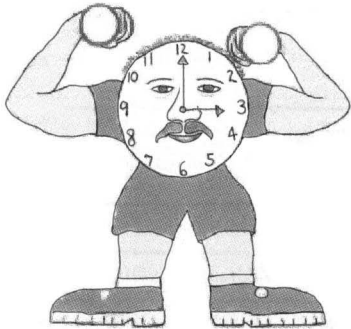
1. My free time is usually spent doing the following things: _____

2. Based on your answers above, would you consider this time wasted or time well spent? _____

3. If it's time wasted, what other choices could you make that would better utilize your time? _____

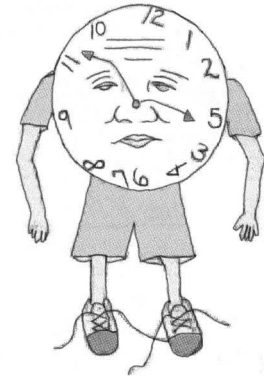
4. Does how you spend your time help you achieve your purpose? Explain your answer. _____

Time Builders



- ⇒ Read a book or study.
- ⇒ Take up a positive hobby such as gardening, art, carpentry, sewing, singing or playing a musical instrument.
- ⇒ Assist your family and community.

Time Busters



- ⇒ Watching TV shows with explicit sex or violence.
- ⇒ Playing violent video games.
- ⇒ Sitting around by yourself or with friends doing nothing.

Test, Prove And Stand Firm

When it comes to your friends and achieving your purpose, keep in mind that friends can either support your positive choices or discourage you, by thoughtless, negative comments, from going after what you want.

As you learned in the previous chapter, we tend to seek the approval of others, especially our friends. We desire to know that those we care about approve of the decisions we make. For example, have you ever worn an outfit and although you can see yourself in the mirror and are satisfied with your appearance, you ask your friend's opinion about how you look? Without confidence in your appearance, a negative comment from a friend could send you back to your room to change.

This can occur with other choices that you make as well. If you are certain that the choices you make concerning your future uphold moral principles and respect the needs of others and yourself, then do not allow negative comments to discourage you from your purpose. Stand firm and do not be swayed by the opinions of others. Learn to shed negative comments like a duck sheds water.

Remember to choose your friends based on their character and actions. Choose to be around people who are positive and encouraging. Keep your eyes and ears open to the people you call friends and don't be fooled. Someone who is honest won't steal. Someone who acts respectful in front of adults, but says disrespectful things behind their backs, is not a respectful person. On the other hand, someone who really cares about others would not intentionally harm them by making negative comments about their purpose in life.





Follow along as the narrative plays, then answer the questions that follow.

It's A Matter Of Choice



I will always remember the day my life changed forever. I was standing on the corner of Amsterdam and Lafayette Street waiting for the number 4 bus so I could go visit my grandfather in the nursing home. The year before, he had a stroke and was paralyzed. The doctor said that if my mom, sister and I, continued to visit and talk to him it would help him, so once or twice a week we went to see him. Except, I would go more often. I hated the thought of him just lying there all alone.

To everyone else I was this tough guy. In the neighborhood I lived in, I thought you had to be tough. You had to know what you're about, too; otherwise, one of the gangs would recruit you, and those gangs were bad news. If you were recruited into

one of the gangs you had three guarantees. The first was that you would get beat up. In fact, to be initiated, ten gang members would stand around you hitting you as many times as they could. The second was that sooner or later you'd be into drugs, either dealing or using, and the third was that you would end up in Juvenile Hall. That's kiddie jail, in case you didn't know.

Even as a little boy, my grandparents would tell me if I worked hard enough, that I could be anything I wanted to be and that it was up to me what I did with my life. The choice was mine. I remember my mom saying to my grandparents, "What y'all telling my son about, he's too little to plan his future. All he cares about right now are toys." I also remember my grandmother saying, that she had seen some show on TV on how little children learn and that if I could care about toys, I could care about my future. I guess that's why I never got involved with the gangs. I wanted my life to be more than that.

I miss my grandmother. She died two years ago. It was really sudden and no one expected her to die. It affected everyone in my family really hard. You see, grandmother was special. It didn't matter how you were feeling. If you talked to her, she would listen and somehow she would make you feel better. She had a way of helping you see how you could solve your problems. She told me all the time that so much of life depended on how we looked at it. It took me a long time to understand what she meant.

When the bus finally came, it was so packed, I barely had room to stand, but I didn't want to waste time waiting for another one. So I braced myself and held on to the metal pole. I told the bus driver to stop on 23rd and King and walked the remaining three blocks to the nursing home. It was a sunny day, but it was cold and windy. I pulled up the collar to my jacket and tucked my head down to block some of the wind from my face. Loose newspapers and other garbage blew towards me as I walked.

On the corner of 24th, a homeless man slept huddled in the doorway of a store that had gone out of business. I often wondered about the homeless on cold days like this one. It really bothered me that these people had nowhere to live. I knew some children in school who would make fun of the homeless people around where we live, or play jokes on them. But I never took part in that stuff. I mean, just because they didn't have a place to live didn't make them any less human. They were someone's son or daughter, maybe even someone's parent. Who ever they were, they didn't deserve to be treated badly.

I was glad when I arrived at the nursing home. I didn't think I could walk much further with that cold wind. I was there so often that the receptionist knew me by name. "Hi Sergio, you're here early today," she said, as she hung up the phone.

"Hi Mrs. Bekelis," I replied. "We had a half-day of school today. I figured I'd come early to spend more time with my grandfather." Smiling she nodded at me as she answered the phone. Pushing the up arrow on the elevator I heard her say, "McMillan's Nursing Home, how may I help you?"

Taking the elevator up to the fifth floor to my grandfather's room, I thought about the last time I was here. My mother and sister were with me. The head nurse, Mrs. Ali, informed us that my grandfather's health was declining. When my mother called to check on him yesterday the nurse on duty said he was stable. I hoped he would be all right. At first it was hard seeing my grandfather like that. But the doctor told us that although he could not communicate, he could probably still hear us. So I would talk to him and remind him of places we had gone together. I liked writing poetry and short stories, so, I would read what I had written. Today I had brought my latest poem to read to him.

When the elevator stopped, I got off and took a left down the hall to room 518. As I passed the nurses' station, I heard one of their monitors start to beep and the nurse said, "It's Mr. Lopez's monitor. Code blue!"

Several nurses and doctors seemed to come from nowhere. I managed to flatten myself



against the wall, as they ran past me. I felt like someone had hit me in the stomach. I had watched enough TV to know that code blue meant the patient wasn't breathing; my grandfather wasn't breathing. For some reason that thought pulled me off the wall and I ran down the hall. I stopped short at the threshold of the door. I couldn't go in because there were too many attendants around the bed. Within a few minutes I heard the doctor say, "Time?" and one of the nurse's answered, "12:39 pm."

At 12:39 pm, my grandfather, Alvarez Lopez, died. I leaned my back against the wall and sunk slowly to the floor. Resting my head against my knees and folding my arms over my head I sat there until the head nurse, Mrs. Ali, called my name.

"Sergio," she said softly. Looking up, I wiped the tears from my face, but the tears kept coming anyway. "I am sure you know by now that your grandfather has passed away. Mrs. Lee is calling to inform your mother. I am sorry. I know how much you loved him."

I couldn't answer. I just nodded and put my head back down on my knees. I knew that my grandfather would die, but somehow it still took me by surprise.

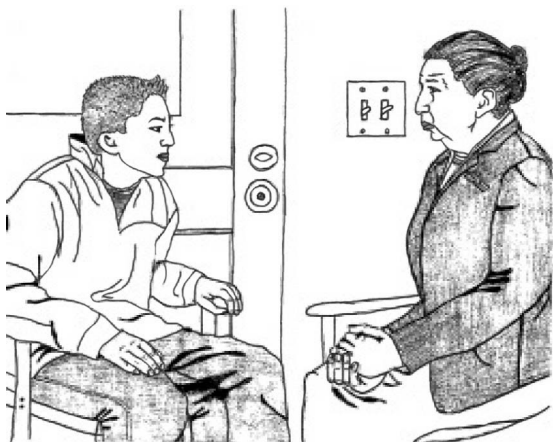
"When you feel up to it," Mrs. Ali continued, "You can go sit in the waiting room. I am sure your mother will be here shortly and if you want someone to talk to in the meantime, I'm here if you need me." I remembered my grandmother always told me that, when she saw that I was worried or upset. I pulled myself together and told Mrs. Ali thank you.

Sitting in the waiting room, I thought about the poem I had planned on reading to my grandfather. I took it out of my coat pocket and just sat there holding it. Mrs. Ali came in to check on me. "How are you doing, Sergio?" she asked, "May I talk with you?"

"I guess I'm okay," I replied. I really wanted to be alone but I knew she was concerned for me, so I added, "Sure, you can talk to me."

Sitting across from me, Mrs. Ali said the words that changed my life. So many years have passed since that day, but I can still remember every

word of our conversation. Looking out of the window, she took a deep breath, and said, "I have been working here for five years. I have seen many elderly people placed here and forgotten. But from the day your grandfather was admitted to this nursing home I have always been impressed with the care you and your family have shown towards him. However, it is you who have impressed me most of all. The fact that you came



here on your own to be with your grandfather says so much about your character. Many young men your age would choose to use their free time playing sports, or hanging out at the arcade. Instead, you would come here to read to your grandfather, not even sure if he could hear you.” Pausing, she looked out the window again. Then she continued, “It is obvious that you are a compassionate person. I hope that you continue to care about people and that someday you make a difference in the lives of others.”

After Mrs. Ali left, I sat there waiting for my mother and thinking about what she had said. I had never really thought of it before, but I realized that I did care about people. I also thought about ways that I could make a difference. I thought about my grandparents telling me time and time again that I could be anything I wanted to be and that the choice was mine.

1. Based on the information contained in this narrative, write a paragraph explaining what Sergio’s purpose in life might be.

Answer may convey the following idea: Sergio was described as a compassionate person so he may likely pursue a career that involves helping people.

2. Identify Sergio’s positive character traits.

Answers may include responsible, respectful and using self-control.

3. What moral values did Sergio have?

Answers may include spending spare time wisely, appreciating positive relationships and sensitive to the needs of others.

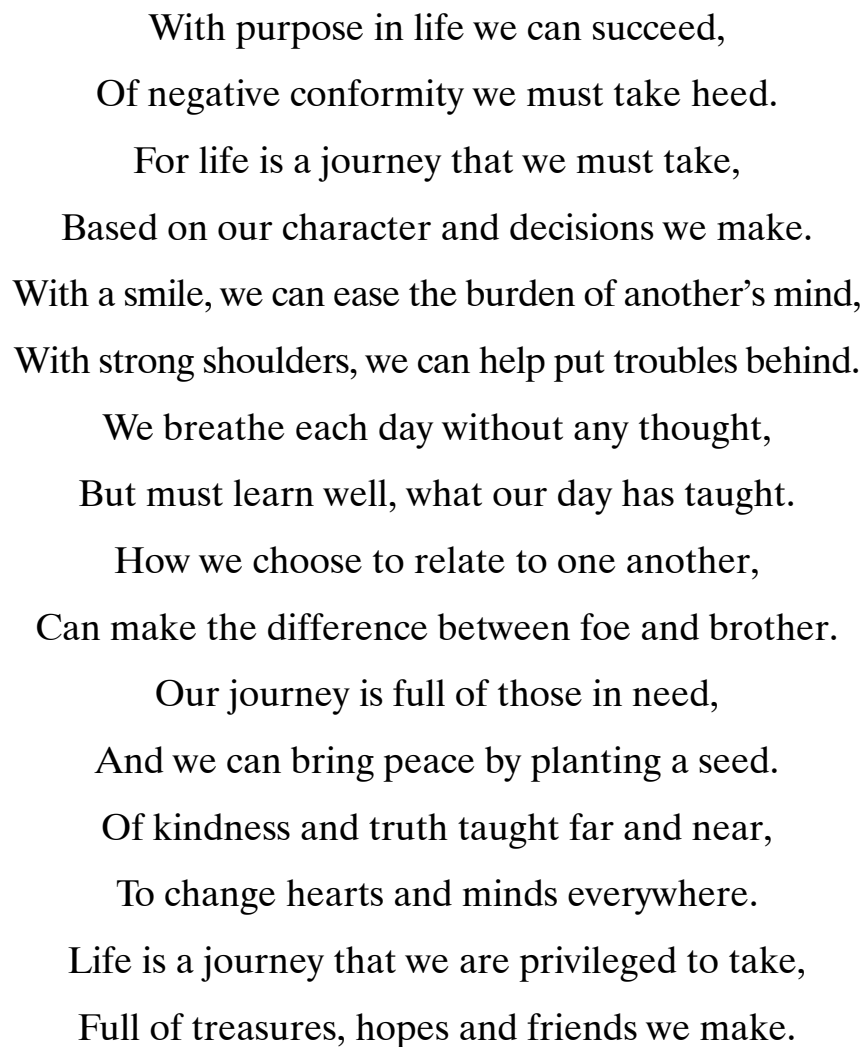
Positive Purpose + Moral Character = Success

Follow along while the poem plays.



Click to Play

Life Is A Journey



With purpose in life we can succeed,
Of negative conformity we must take heed.
For life is a journey that we must take,
Based on our character and decisions we make.
With a smile, we can ease the burden of another's mind,
With strong shoulders, we can help put troubles behind.
We breathe each day without any thought,
But must learn well, what our day has taught.
How we choose to relate to one another,
Can make the difference between foe and brother.
Our journey is full of those in need,
And we can bring peace by planting a seed.
Of kindness and truth taught far and near,
To change hearts and minds everywhere.
Life is a journey that we are privileged to take,
Full of treasures, hopes and friends we make.

What I Have Learned

- My life has meaning and purpose when I apply certain principles to it.
- Making an effort to help others gives meaning and purpose to my life especially if I can help them learn *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*.
- Getting a proper education will help me determine my purpose in life and will help me to help others do the same.
- Who I associate with and how I use my spare time can determine what I conform to.
- I will seek advice only from those who are trustworthy, honest and responsible.
- How I spend my time will determine whether I achieve my purpose or not.
- Conforming to negative, unacceptable standards will affect my purpose and keep me from achieving my goals.



“The best exercise for the heart is to do whatever I can to help other people.”

Enrichment Activities

1. Working in pairs, interview one another about your purpose in life.
2. Read a biography and do a book report on someone you feel achieved his or her purpose in life.
3. Write a short essay about the impact of negative conformity on the ability to achieve your purpose in life. Volunteer to share your essay with the class.
4. Do the **“Just For Fun”** activity on **page 107**.



Just For Fun

Find the hidden words.



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

WORD LIST

purpose
 determination
 strengths
 future

direction
 goals
 ability
 acceptance

motivation
 value
 conformity
 adversity



Chapter Six

Reach For Your Goals

Note To The Teacher

Some people have an innate ability to set goals and to achieve them. Others must be taught the value of setting their minds in advance to achieve a particular objective and to do everything within their power to accomplish that end. The ability to set goals and to work to accomplish them builds character and self-worth. For this reason goal setting must be taught as part of acceptance. Every individual, young and old, must work towards and achieve something worthwhile if they are to enjoy personal satisfaction from life. Yet, so often, we see children who live only for the moment with no clear direction to their lives. These are the students who are classified as underachievers, not working up to their potential or doing the quality work you know they are capable of. In addition to poor school work, this lack of drive and motivation will affect their family lives and ability to make sound moral decisions.

In this lesson students will:

- Understand that purpose in life and goal setting go hand in hand.
- Learn the importance of differentiating between positive moral goals and those that are negative, self-defeating and even dangerous.
- Appreciate that goals, regardless of how big or small, should be pursued.
- Understand that goals require steadfastness, responsibility and many other positive character traits.

By teaching children how to set and achieve goals, you will afford them skills which will improve the quality of their lives.

Unit Two

Lesson Plan

Reach For Your Goals

PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

Students will learn how to set positive goals. Students will also learn that positive goals are important in building positive moral character.

MATERIALS

- ▶ Students' handbooks

PROCEDURE

1. Remind students that in the last lesson, “**There Is A Purpose To It All,**” they learned that life has meaning and that having a purpose gives them a positive direction in which to grow and mature. Ask students the following questions:

- a. How can conforming to negative standards affect your purpose in life? (*Conforming to negative standards can lead you to make poor choices.*)
- b. How can developing a positive character help to achieve your purpose? (*A person with a positive moral character will be self-disciplined, resourceful and seek advice from those who are trustworthy, honest, and responsible in order to achieve their purpose.*)

2. Explain to students that in this lesson, they will see that learning to set goals enhances a person’s value and worth. Explain to students that the word **goal** means *an end that one strives to attain*. Success in meeting their goals will enable them to achieve their purpose in life. Guide class discussion by asking the following questions:

- a. How many of you have ever wanted to be on a team or in the band and practiced, tried out and made it? (*Almost everyone should raise their hands.*)
- b. How many of you have ever wanted to buy something, earned the money and then bought it? (*Almost everyone should raise their hands.*)

Tell students that when they set their minds on something they want to do, and then take the necessary steps to achieve it, they have demonstrated a basic understanding of how to set and achieve goals.

3. Explain that whether or not they are aware of it, goals are a part of their daily lives. Sometimes goals are set without any conscious effort and therefore, may not be recognized as goals. Share with the students that when they were younger, they were setting and accomplishing goals before they even realized what they were doing. Examples include learning how to tie their shoelaces, ride a bike, write their names or read. Tell students that as they mature and their needs become more complex, they will need to learn how to consciously set goals in order to achieve success. Have students turn to **page 109** in their handbooks and read the **“Introduction.”** Remind students that making goals, like determining their purpose, can be based on influences, likes, dislikes and needs. Hence, goals can be as individualized as the people who make them. Have students turn to **page 110** in their handbooks and read, then discuss the section entitled, **“Bee a Goal Setter.”** Allow students time to write some areas of interest, their likes and dislikes on the lines. Ask for a few volunteers to share what they wrote.

4. Emphasize that although there are many different types of goals, they basically fall into two categories, positive and negative. Have students turn to **page 112** in their handbooks and read the section entitled, **“What’s The Difference?”** Stress that making negative goals can be dangerous to the individual and those around him. Students must always be aware of the types of goals that they are setting for themselves and consider the outcome of those goals before pursuing them. Consciously setting goals, much like all other activities in our lives, requires careful consideration of the possible outcome. Have students turn to the section entitled, **“Use Self-Control And Morality When Setting Goals,”** found on **pages 113-114** in their handbooks. Instruct students to read the articles and then answer the questions that follow. Discuss the illustration found on **page 115** and the consequences of each of the goals shown.

5. Tell students that they must consider that there are both realistic and unrealistic goals. Ask students to turn to **pages 116-117** in their handbooks and read the definition of the word **realistic** and the section entitled, **“Be Realistic.”** Have students read the scenarios then answer the questions that follow.

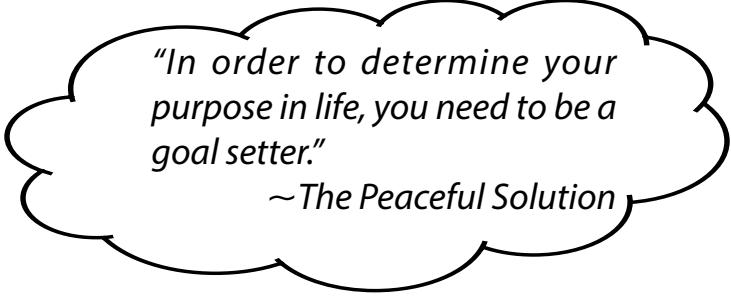
6. Explain to students that another aspect of goal setting is differentiating between short and long-term goals. Instruct students to turn to **page 118** in their handbooks and read the section entitled, **“Here’s The Long And The Short Of It!”** Tell students that by learning to set short-term goals, they will be encouraged to achieve their long-term goals and determine their purpose in life.

7. Have students turn to **page 119** in their handbooks, and have them read the section entitled, **“Here’s How It All Comes Together.”** Instruct students to write down some goals they would like to accomplish. Allow as many students as time permits to share their goals with the class.

8. Explain to students that identifying the goals they want to accomplish is only possible when it includes having positive character traits, organizing and prioritizing their needs and dealing with setbacks. Have students turn to **pages 121-122** in their handbooks and read and discuss the section entitled, **“Goal Maintenance Requires Character.”** Stress to students that working toward a positive goal does not always go smoothly. Setbacks or problems may occur, but positive moral character traits will help them handle setbacks. Have students turn to **pages 123-125** in their handbooks and read the section entitled, **“Be Prepared to Deal With Setbacks.”** After reading the three easy steps to handle setbacks and barriers, guide students to read the scenario on **page 125** and then discuss the questions that follow.

9. Conclude the lesson by having students turn to **page 126** in their handbooks and read the section entitled, **“What I Have Learned.”** Briefly discuss with students the importance of setting positive goals and accomplishing them despite setbacks. Remind students that it is vital to achieve a goal without compromising their positive character traits. This will continue to build character that will help them succeed in all aspects of their lives.

Unit Two



"In order to determine your purpose in life, you need to be a goal setter."

~The Peaceful Solution

Chapter Six

Reach For Your Goals

Introduction

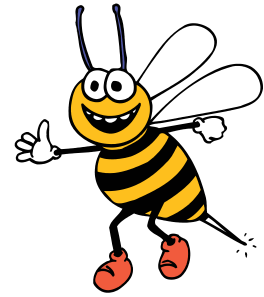
Did you know that you have been achieving goals since birth? A goal is an end that you strive to attain. Walking, talking, attending school for the first time, even learning how to ride a bike are all goals that you have already accomplished. As you grow, there are goals that you will automatically achieve simply by moving from one developmental stage to the next. The developmental stages from infancy to childhood and from adolescence to adulthood are times of incredible physical, mental and cognitive (the way you think) growth. You reach these milestones without being aware of them.

However, there is a vast difference between goals you have accomplished because you have reached certain developmental stages and goals that you consciously set and strive to attain. Learning to consciously set and achieve positive moral goals is an important part of growing up. It shows that you are maturing, that you have self-control and that you are responsible and disciplined. It is also one more step in achieving a positive moral character and accepting yourself as a worthwhile human being.

In this lesson, you will learn that in addition to having a purpose to your life, you must also have positive moral goals. A positive moral goal can be as big as achieving your purpose in life, or as small as keeping your room clean. Positive moral goals, especially those related to the development of a moral character, will help you resist negative peer pressure and will keep you focused on making choices that will benefit you and others.

Bee A Goal Setter

To set goals you must first identify what you want to accomplish. Your goal could be based upon your experiences and observations. Sometimes experience can be the worst way to learn. Many farmers go broke each year because they experiment instead of using proven methods.



For example, you read an article about the pollution in the oceans and its effects on marine life. You become so interested in the subject that you research all you can about the subject and decide that your purpose is to help improve the condition of the ocean. Based on these influences you may make a goal to become a marine biologist. Goals, therefore, will vary based on your studies and also your likes and dislikes. Be very mindful and careful when pursuing your goals. If true moral values are consistently broken, then problems can arise. On the other hand, if you desire peace, joy, great health and yes, financial security, you must base all your decisions on true moral values in the endeavor to bring these things to your life.

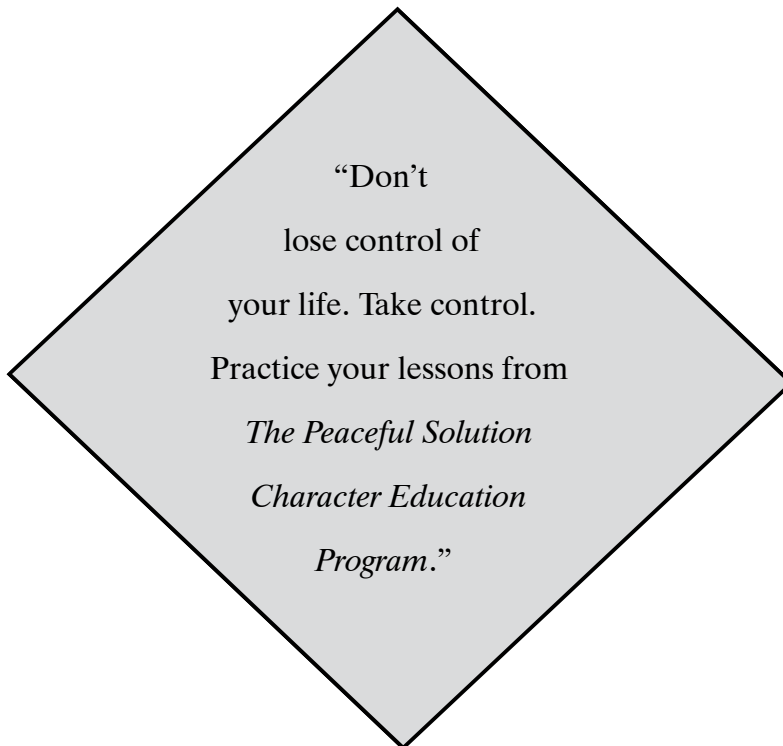
In addition to setting goals to fulfill your purpose in life, you can set goals to better yourself. For example, you can improve your grades or learn to play an instrument. In other words, you can set goals for what you want to achieve and for what you want to improve in.

MY GOALS 

1. Learn how to better manage my time.
2. Join a speech class.
3. Learn to play the guitar.



On the lines below, list areas of interests and your likes and dislikes that could help you in setting a positive goal.



What's The Difference?

Although there are many different types of goals, most goals can be categorized as either positive or negative. A moral positive goal is beneficial for yourself and others. It strengthens and motivates you to succeed and will build moral character. A negative, immoral goal is not advantageous, healthy or beneficial. If it is achieved, it could result in harm to yourself or others.

Read and discuss the following examples of positive and negative goals.

Positive Goals

► **Positive, honest, moral goals will help you to be a better person. They will support your choice to develop a moral character.**

Example: Twelve-year old Randy wants a great grade on his math test. Wanting to earn it honestly, he studied and got an "A."

► **Positive, honest, moral goals cause no harm and have no negative effects to yourself or others.**

Example: John is tired of being picked on by the school bully. He plans to find a peaceful way to handle the problem by speaking to his parents and guidance counselor.

► **Positive, honest, moral goals will help you achieve your purpose.**

Example: Valerie's purpose is to help others. Her goal is to become a nurse.

Negative Goals

► **Negative, immoral goals will compromise your choice to have an honest, moral character and be a better person.**

Example: Twelve-year old Michelle is determined to experiment with drugs by the time she is thirteen.

► **Negative, immoral goals cause harm and have negative effects on others.**

Example: John is tired of being picked on by the school bully. He plans to retaliate by bringing a weapon to school.

► **Negative, immoral goals can prevent you from achieving your purpose.**

Example: Landon's purpose is to become rich one day. His goal is to sell drugs.

Use Self-Control And Morality When Setting Goals

To determine if your goals are positive, moral and honest, or negative, immoral and dishonest, think carefully about the outcome, or end result. If you were to achieve your goal, how could it affect you and those around you? Keep in mind that the ability to stop, think and weigh the consequences of your actions is called self-control. Valuing your life and possessions, and that of others is the basis of moral or ethical principles.

Self-control and morality are the foundation of all positive goals. People who stop, think and set morally positive goals demonstrate respect for themselves and others. Setting positive goals will allow them to lead a life that is fulfilling and rewarding. These people are also examples and role models to those around them. On the other hand, goals that are made impulsively and because of emotions such as hate, anger, revenge, or jealousy, can result in harm to oneself and to others.

Read the following articles and answer the questions that follow.

Three Boys Plot To Kill

May 21, 1998: Three sixth-grade boys had a “hit list” and were plotting to kill fellow classmates in a sniper attack on the last day of school, police in St. Charles, Mo., say.

abcnews.go.com

Tommy's Bumper Sticker

Tommy Tighe decided at the tender age of four that he wanted to bring peace to the world. By the age of six he had managed to borrow \$454 from the Children's Free Enterprise Bank to produce 1000 Bumper stickers that say, “PEACE: Please Do It For Us Kids.” Tommy made nine goals for himself. Here are four.

1. Make a plan for a loan.
2. Have a bumper sticker printed.
3. Get addresses of leaders.
4. Write a letter to all the presidents and leaders of other countries and send them a free bumper sticker.

members.ozemail.com

Unit Two

1. How do the goals in the first article differ from the ones in the second article? In the first article the three boys' goals were negative, but the second one was positive.

2. Identify the principles in each of the articles and determine whether they are immoral or moral. In the first article, the three boys had no regard for the value of life. They therefore exhibited immoral principles. In the second article, Tommy's goal was to bring about world peace. His goal showed value for life and was therefore moral.

Discuss the illustration and the consequences of each goal shown.

Points may vary, but guide class discussion to show students what benefit they can become to themselves and others when these positive goals are pursued.

Think Positive, Be Positive Make Positive Goals



Be Realistic

Now that you know the importance of setting goals that are positive, the next step is to be realistic about the goals you set. Realistic means *to be sensible and practical*. Goals that are realistic are well-planned. Goals that are unrealistic are poorly planned or not planned at all. They are pursued without consideration of all that would be required for them to be accomplished.

To be realistic about the goals you set, take into account the following questions:

- **How long will it take for you to accomplish what you want?** Will you have enough time? Without considering the time it will take, you may take on more than you can handle within a given time period.
- **Is this something you can accomplish by yourself or will you need assistance from others?** If so, are they willing to assist you? Keep in mind that the only person you have control over is you. You cannot force someone to help you. That willingness must come from the individual. You also need to consider how often you will need their assistance and whether they are committed to helping you every time you need them.
- **Will you need additional information to pursue your goal?** Before you commit yourself to pursuing a goal, consider if you have enough information to make a proper decision.
- **What sacrifices will you have to make?** Making sacrifices when setting a goal means that you may have to give up one or more things in order to accomplish what you want. Are you willing to make those sacrifices? For example, you forfeit going bowling, to the movies or any other costly event with your friends so that you could save money to spend on books with the information you need to further your goals.
- **Will you need money to accomplish your goal?** If so, you must have an honest, legal means of getting the money you need. For example, you want to become a carpenter and a contractor. First, you need knowledge concerning the trade, the tools and how to use them. Then you need knowledge on contracting jobs, pricing and bidding on jobs, plus hiring suitable help for this trade. Working spare time for a carpenter or contractor would be a great way to start.

The Sweet Smell Of Success

When you consider these questions before you commit yourself to pursuing a goal, you can be sure that you are being realistic about the goals you are setting. Realistic goals that are well planned will motivate you to attain them, because you will know that they are within your ability to achieve. Setting and achieving realistic goals lead to success.

The Agony Of Failure

Unrealistic goals usually end in failure because they are not well-planned. They can leave the individual feeling frustrated. Unrealistic goals that are unattainable could also discourage you from setting other goals. Goals can also be unrealistic if they are set too high. In other words, they are unreachable at a certain time because of circumstances that are not within your control.

Read the following scenarios. Decide which goal is realistic and attainable and which one is not. Then answer the questions that follow.

a. Thirteen-year-old Brenda wants to earn \$150.00 for new school clothes. She decides to babysit for her neighbors. They agree to pay her \$20.00 every weekend to babysit between the months of June through August. Is Brenda's goal of earning \$150.00 realistic and attainable? Why or why not?

(Yes, Brenda's goal is realistic and attainable. There will be approximately 12 weekends within those three months. If she saves her money, she could earn as much as \$240.)

b. Drew has a two-page book report due tomorrow. The book has 300 pages and he has not begun reading it. His goal is to read the book and write the report between 7 pm and 9 pm. He wants to be done by 9 pm so he can watch a TV show. Is Drew's goal of completing the book, writing the report, and watching the show realistic and attainable? Why or why not?

(No, Drew's goal is not realistic and attainable. For most teenagers, reading and understanding a 300 page book then writing a report on it will take longer than 2 hours.)

Here's The Long And The Short Of It!

The next step in setting positive, realistic goals is to determine if they are long-term or short-term. A short-term goal is one that can be achieved within a short period of time. For example, you make a goal to clean your room after school or you decide you need to save your allowance this week to attend a special field trip. Short-term goals are a great way to test your goal-setting skills. An easy way to make goal setting a part of your daily routine is to make a "To Do List." Write down three or four things you want to accomplish each day, and then work at accomplishing them.



TO DO LIST

- Research at the library
- Start book report
- Call about summer job
- Clean room

A long-term goal takes more time to accomplish. These are goals that help you to focus on things you want to achieve in the future. For example, one of your long-term goals might be to graduate from high school, go to trade school, and then get married. Although long-term goals require more patience to achieve than a short-term goal, they are just as important. Setting long-term goals can help you to focus your energies on achieving your purpose in life.

**“Put your goals in writing.
This shows you are more committed to success.”**

Here's How It All Comes Together

So far you have learned about the importance of having purpose in your life and of setting positive, realistic goals. When you combine the concepts of having both purpose and goals, and consistently practice the skills of setting short and long-term goals, you can increase your opportunities to succeed.

Example: Your purpose is to help others.

Your long-term goal is to seek a position in which you can help others, such as a teacher, city, state or national manager.

Here are some examples of short-term goals that can help you achieve your long term-goal and ultimately your purpose.

- ① Manage time and complete all assignments.
- ② Study with the idea in mind that gaining knowledge is the main thing that will help you achieve your goals.
- ③ Volunteer to be a tutor at school. This will help you gain experience in dealing with others on a one-on-one basis.
- ④ Get enough sleep but do not oversleep. Decide how much sleep your body requires and train yourself to get only that amount of sleep.

Note that there is no limit to the amount of short-term goals you can make on you way to achieving your long-term goal. In fact, the more consideration you put into your short-term goals, the more likely you are to succeed.

Getting The Hang Of It

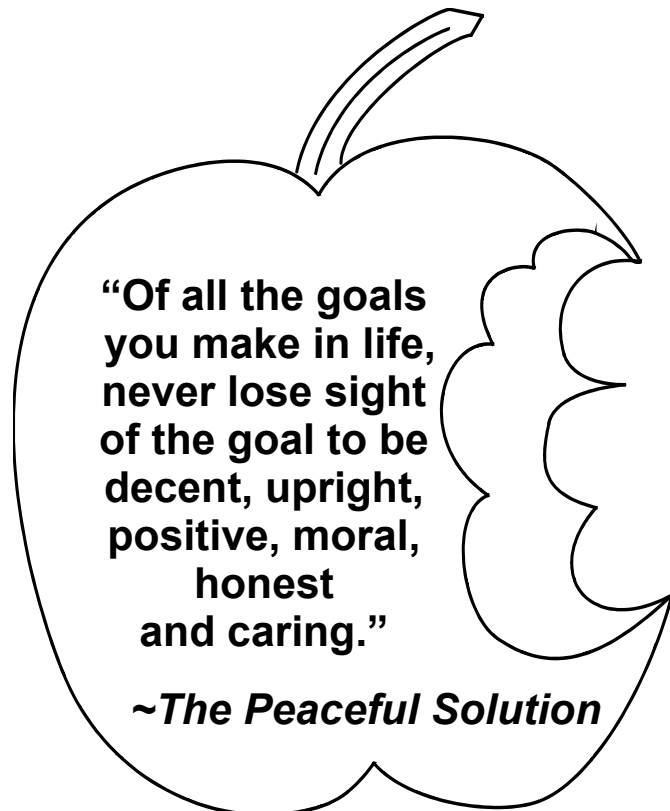
List Two Long-Term Goals That You Want To Accomplish:

- A. Example: I want to be an architect.
- B. _____

List Four Short-Term Goals For Each Of The Long-Term Goals Above:

- | A | B |
|--|----------|
| 1. <u>Get a part-time job for tuition.</u> | 1. _____ |
| 2. <u>Develop strong study habits.</u> | 2. _____ |
| 3. <u>Graduate from high school.</u> | 3. _____ |
| 4. <u>Attend and graduate college.</u> | 4. _____ |
-

**Take A Bite
Out Of This...**



Goal Maintenance Requires Character

Once you have decided on what your goals are and have written them down, the next step is to start putting your ideas into practice. In other words, you have to work at maintaining your goals in order to accomplish them. To maintain a goal is to be committed in words and actions to bring it to success.

Maintaining honest goals requires that you practice positive, moral character traits such as responsibility, determination, courage, discipline, optimism, self-control and patience. Without these positive traits, difficulties could arise making it tempting to abandon or give up on your goal.

The Following Are Examples Of How Positive Character Traits Can Be Used To Maintain Your Goals.

A responsible person is accountable for his or her decisions and actions. Responsibility in maintaining your goals means to do everything within your power to accomplish the task or tasks that are relevant to your goal. For example, Joey wanted to be a lifeguard. To get certified he had to make it to class at four o'clock daily. In order to make sure he would not miss practice, he arranged rides a week in advance.

A determined person does not give up or quit. Determination in maintaining your goal means that even when things do not go as planned, you continue to try. For example, you have to take an admissions test to get into a special high school for the performing arts. Sadly, you fail the test, but instead of giving up you decide to retake the exam at a later date.

A courageous person will pursue a goal even when faced with opposition or is afraid of failing. Keep in mind that courage is not the absence of fear; rather, it is the ability to function even when you are afraid. Be brave and do what is right in spite of fear. Courage in goal setting means to stick with your positive, moral goal regardless of the opinions of others. Don't allow anyone to talk you out of pursuing a positive goal. For example, Jerome lived in the rough part of town. Most of his friends were involved in gangs and would try to talk him into joining their gang. Jerome's goal was to go to college. Almost every day he would have to face at least one of the gang members and tell him that he was not joining his gang. His friends would ridicule him when he said he had to go home to study, and would tell him that all of his studying was just a waste of time. Jerome courageously ignored them.

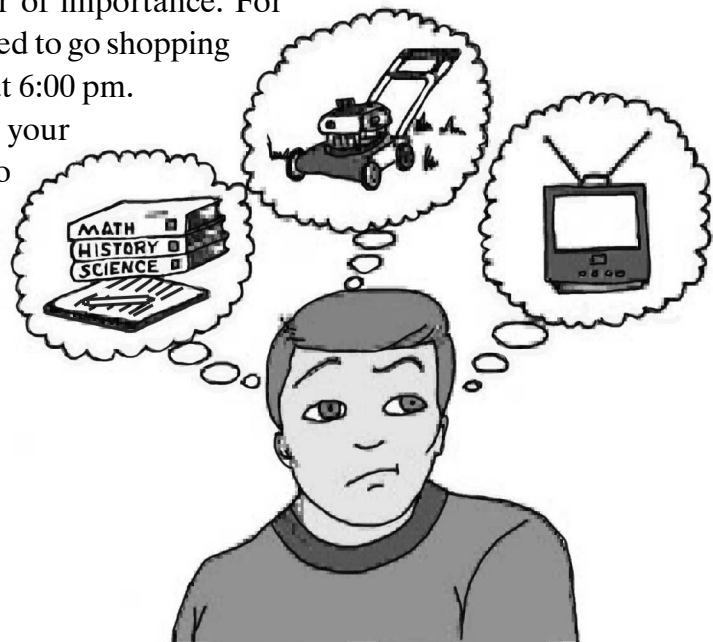
An optimistic person accepts that although a situation may go wrong, there are still ways to achieve a goal. This enables him or her to look on the bright side of things. For example, your goal is to make it to the library to do some research before it closes. Just as you are about to leave, your mother says the car won't start. Instead of getting upset, you tell her that you will use the time to make an outline and ask if maybe you can go to the library tomorrow.

A person with self-control does not act impulsively. He or she considers how their actions will affect their goal. For example, your goal is to save enough money to buy the books you need for your studies. With your allowance and doing odd jobs, it will take you several weeks to save the money. During that time you refrain from making any other purchases so that you can accomplish your goal.

A patient person is able to handle disappointments or adversity calmly and without complaining. Patience in goal setting means accepting that plans will not always go as expected. In other words, there will be times when you will have to wait for what you want. For example, Richard wanted to work during the summer. Although he tried several places that were hiring, he was too young to be considered for the positions. Richard would have to wait until next summer when he will be a year older before he could work. Although disappointed, he did not complain.

A disciplined person will consistently make choices that will enable a goal to be successfully accomplished. Discipline in goal setting means to be willing to establish a routine, to organize and prioritize your daily activities, hobbies and even the goals themselves. To do this you must arrange your needs by order of importance. For example, you have been invited to go shopping with your friend at the mall at 6:00 pm.

You have two hours before your friend and his father come to pick you up. You have to do your homework, mow the lawn and there is this really great show you want to watch on TV. What are your highest priorities? You're right, homework and mowing the lawn. You can watch the show another time.

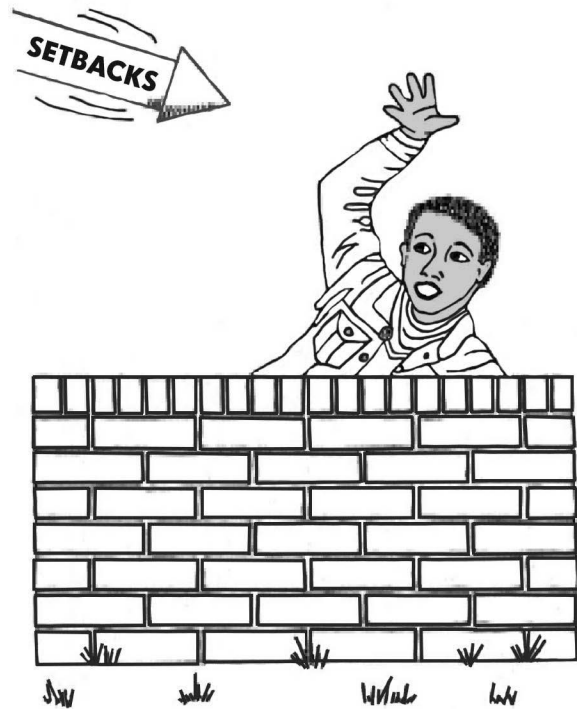


Be Prepared To Deal With Setbacks

When planning goals it is important to consider the things that could keep you from achieving your objectives. Circumstances that interfere with reaching your goals are called setbacks.

There will be times when, as hard as you try to plan for every problem, there will be unexpected difficulties along the way. A great goal maintenance plan takes into consideration possible setbacks and the most effective ways to deal with them.

Setbacks can come in many different forms, shapes and sizes. Sometimes circumstances will occur that are beyond your control. This is where learning to accept that there are some things you can control and some things you cannot is really helpful. For example, there is finally an opening available on the debating team. However, the morning of the tryouts you wake up with laryngitis. Illness, accidents, and unexpected changes are all circumstances that are beyond your control and can affect whether you achieve your goals. Other common obstacles to achieving your goals are a lack of planning, lack of organizing and making bad choices. Like unexpected situations, these setbacks can create barriers. Accepting that setbacks can occur is your opportunity to plan for healthy, effective ways to deal with them. In fact, having a plan to deal with possible barriers will lessen the opportunity for failure and disappointment, which often lead to goal abandonment.



The Following Are Three Easy Ways To Handle Setbacks And Barriers:

1. **Be prepared to be resourceful and flexible.** A resourceful person is willing to devise ways and means to handle a situation and to change plans if necessary in order to effectively deal with unexpected situations. The best way to accomplish this is to have a backup plan. For example, you have to get an interview for a summer job, but you know that sometimes your parent's car has problems starting. So you get permission to arrange a ride with your friend's parents just in case your car breaks down.
2. **Wear your positive character traits like a suit of armor. Traits such as determination, courage and patience can help you keep things in perspective.** Often, when things don't go your way the tendency is to give up. Don't give up. Moral positive goals that will benefit you and others are worth pursuing, even when we experience setbacks.
3. **Maintain a positive attitude.** You will learn from this experience. Find a way to turn it into something positive.



Disappointments in life will occur from time to time. By having a positive attitude you can turn your disappointments into victory and come out a winner when you remain optimistic and determined. It's all in controlling your attitude and abiding by what you have learned from *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*.

Setbacks can also be an opportunity to learn about yourself, to develop or strengthen aspects of your character and to practice those lessons that you learn from this program. Think about it. How can you develop the positive character trait of patience if you get everything you want right away? How can you develop determination if you never have to deal with adversity?

So the next time things don't go the way you plan and you have to deal with a setback, think first about what you have learned in this program and apply it to the problem.

Read the following scenario and devise a plan to overcome the setback and come out a winner.

For two years you have been trying to win the local science fair. This year you came up with a great project. You did all the research, and painstakingly built the display model by yourself. It took you an entire week to finish it. When it was completed it looked just like the one in the science magazine. You felt confident that this time you had an award-winning project. In fact, everything went so well that you were finished two weeks in advance. A week before the project was due you came home from school just in time to hear your mother telling your little brother that he did not have permission to enter your room and touch your belongings. When you go into your room to see what he had touched, you see the model, you had spent so much time working on, laying broken on the floor where it had fallen.

1. How would you feel? *(Answers will vary, but may include: sad, angry, or disappointed)*

2. Would you classify this as a setback? Why? *(Answers will vary, but may include: yes, because you will have to try to fix your project or redo it completely.)*

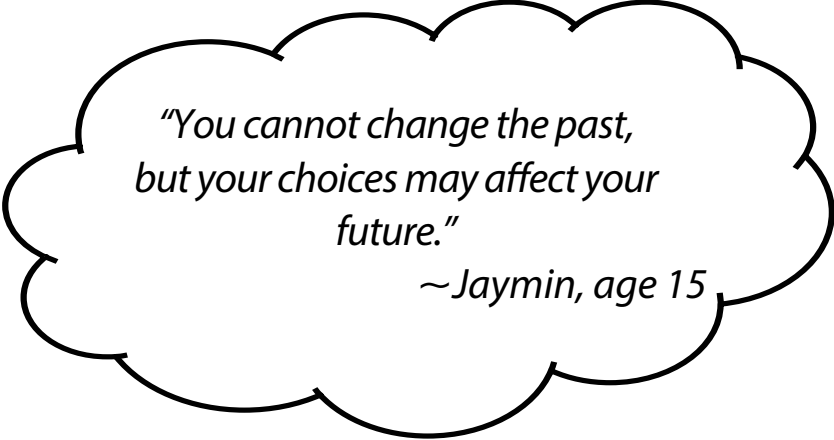
3. What positive character trait(s) would you need to handle the situation appropriately with your little brother? *(Answers will vary, but may include: patience, kindness, compassion)*

4. What positive character trait(s) would you need to turn this setback into victory? *(Answers will vary, but may include: endurance, persistence, patience)*

5. Can you identify the bright side of this situation? How could identifying the bright side help you to formulate a plan of action? By handling this setback appropriately and using your positive character traits, what could you learn about yourself? *(Answers will vary, but may include: since you finished your project early, you have the time to fix the model. You could get your brother to help you in order to teach him a lesson on responsibility and respect. By handling this setback appropriately you could learn that you are a great teacher. Your project may even be better with some extra work on it.)*

What I Have Learned

- Achieving goals is a part of daily life. Sometimes goals are set without any conscious effort and may not be recognized as goals.
- When I set my mind on something I want to do, I can take the necessary steps to achieve it.
- Consciously setting goals helps me to succeed in life.
- I choose to set only positive goals, not negative ones. Negative goals can be harmful, hurtful, and dangerous to myself and others. Positive goals can help me achieve my purpose in life and build my moral character.
- I will make sure my goals are realistic and attainable. I am willing to challenge myself, pushing my limits of success.
- Setbacks or obstacles are a normal part of life and can affect accomplishing my goals. With careful planning and positive character traits, I can deal with setbacks and achieve my goals.



*"You cannot change the past,
but your choices may affect your
future."*

~Jaymin, age 15

Enrichment Activities

1. Plan a field trip and set up goals on how to accomplish it.
2. Give a two minute speech about a goal and how you plan to accomplish it.
3. Do the **“Just For Fun”** activities on pages 128-129.





Just For Fun

Activity #1



Unscramble the treasure traits and write the word on the line below each scramble. Then match the unscrambled word on the left with the correct definition on the right.

a. fedlssipienlc

self-discipline

b. asttedasf

steadfast

c. vacpernesere

perseverance

d. blexflel

flexible

e. pesronlebis

responsible

f. desucof

focused

g. eapteinc

patience

h. goreasoucu

courageous

i. ytgrtinie

integrity

f Centering attention on what needs to be done.

a Even when tempted to do something else, you continue to accomplish your goals.

i Adhering to a code of values to succeed at your goal.

g Shows self-control through setbacks without complaint.

b Determined not to change the course set for your goal.

h Not letting fear or despair keep you from your goals.

e Doing what is necessary to complete a task.

c To persist with your goals in spite of setbacks.

d Willing to adjust goals to be more realistic.



"The light at the end of the tunnel is not a train to run you over."

Chapter Seven

My Choices And My Future

Note To The Teacher

The decision-making process, that ability to gather facts and then decide on a course of action, based on moral principles and integrity is something we must train our children to do if they are to avoid those choices that lead to failure and embrace those that lead to success. Life, after all, is about choices. Every choice we make reflects who we are, what we believe in, what we will stand for and what we will fall for. The choices we make determine whether we accept our lives and the lives of others as worthwhile, how we interact with one another, and whether we achieve our goals and purposes.

As adults, we sometimes question our own ability to choose correctly and make sound decisions. How much more difficult it must be for our children to consistently make moral choices, especially in today's society. Although our world continues to advance technologically, social ills are advancing quicker. Those who are caught in the cross-fire of the war on drugs, the war on crime and the sexual revolution are the youngest and most impressionable members of our society, our children. From this precarious place our adolescents must make choices regarding their physical and mental well-being and ultimately their future. In this lesson students will:

- Understand the importance of differentiating between a wise moral choice and one that may scar them for a lifetime.
- Explore ways that making negative choices can affect their lives and gather problem solving skills to assist them in avoiding such choices.
- Appreciate that positive problem solving and decision making must include the use of moral values and integrity, because their choices determine acceptance of themselves and others.

Unit Two

Lesson Plan

My Choices And My Future

PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

Student's will learn that the choices they make today will affect their future. Students will also practice making sensible choices.

MATERIALS

- Cassette player
- *Teacher's Manual Audio Lessons* cassette
- Students' handbooks

PROCEDURE

1. Review the previous lesson entitled, "**Reach For Your Goals**" by asking students the following questions:
 - a. What are some benefits of setting a positive moral goal? *(Answers will vary, but should include: a positive goal will help you to accomplish your tasks. It can help you achieve your purpose.)*
 - b. What are some ways you can manage your goals? *(Answers will vary, but may include: setting realistic goals, being resourceful, responsible, and accountable for your actions, being organized and prioritizing where needed, and using your positive moral character traits to achieve your goals.)*
2. Inform students that in this lesson they will learn that the choices they make today can have a profound impact on their lives. Have students turn to **page 131** in their handbooks and read the "**Introduction.**" Emphasize that a choice made today can have either a positive or negative effect on their futures.
3. Explain to students that everyone has the power to choose their actions. However, their choices can be manipulated by external influences. Ask students for some examples of influences. *(Answers may include television, movies, songs, actors, singers, family and friends.)* Stress that some influences are positive, and

some are negative. A positive influence would be someone they admire because he possesses a moral character and who influences them to do well at school or to choose a specific purpose in life. An example of a negative influence would be someone who influences them to use drugs or other substances that can harm them physically and mentally. Stress to students that yielding to negative influences can have a detrimental effect on their future. Have students turn to **pages 132-135** in their handbooks and read the section entitled, **“Influences Are Everywhere.”** Discuss with students some of the influences they have in their lives.

4. Explain that the need to fit in could result in feeling pressured to do things they wouldn't usually do. However, exercising self-control in their interactions and choices is the first step in dealing with the influence of negative peer pressure. Have students read and discuss the section entitled, **“Self-Control”** on **pages 136-138** in their handbooks. Emphasize that careful consideration is needed to avoid poor choices.

5. Stress to students that if they do not exercise self-control, they will give in to negative peer pressure which could result in risky behaviors. Have students turn to **page 139** in their handbooks and read and discuss the section entitled, **“A Lack Of Self-Control=Big Problems.”** Guide the discussion towards specific risky behaviors as addressed in the **“Outcomes of Negative Influences”** chart. Have students complete the chart and discuss their answers. Write on the board any answers they are missing. Emphasize that there are logical reasons why these behaviors are termed “risky.”

6. Have students read the section entitled, **“To Do Or Not To Do”** on **pages 140-143** in their handbooks. Stress that knowing why these behaviors are risky will help them to resist influences that encourage sexual behaviors, taking drugs and alcohol and engaging in criminal activities. Read the article **“Bad Choices Led to Teenager's Death.”** Have students answer the questions that follow on **page 144**. Stress that engaging in risky behavior is not a game, it can even result in death.

7. Emphasize that exercising self-control and considering the consequences of their actions will enable them to make wise choices. Have students read the section entitled, **“Make A Right Choice”** on **page 145** in their handbooks. Emphasize that a right choice is worth the effort, regardless of how they are viewed by their peers. They can have the satisfaction of making a choice that will keep themselves and others

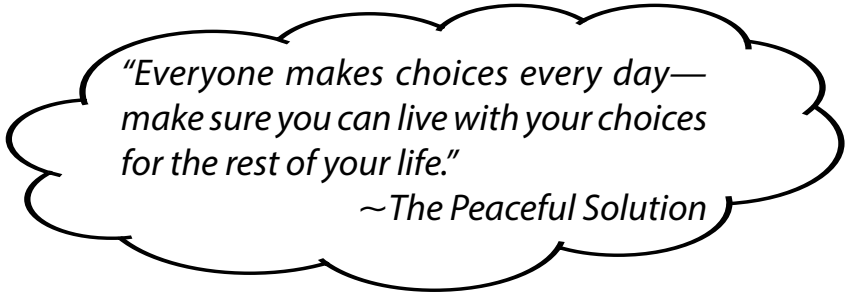
safe. Have students complete the “**Goals Worksheet**” on page 146 in their handbooks. Remind them that achieving their goals requires staying focused and making right choices.

8. **Roleplay: “Be Prepared When The Heat Is On:”** This activity on pages 147-150 in their handbooks will acquaint students with real life situations and practical ways to make right choices when faced with the pressure of negative influences. Allow students to act out each scene then discuss the questions. Prompt students to realize that there can be many ways to achieve a positive outcome. The most important thing is to avoid a choice that could cause harm to anyone.

9. **Song: “Life’s Choices:”** Instruct students to turn to page 151 in their handbooks and read along as you play the song entitled “**Life’s Choices**” from the *Teacher’s Manual Audio Lessons*.

10. Have students read the section entitled, “**What I Have Learned**” on page 152 in their handbooks. Conclude the lesson by reminding students that there are many ways to practice the character trait of acceptance. The concept of acceptance involves several aspects. Remind them that they should accept the positive moral characteristics of others, regardless of their differences. Accepting that they are special and unique with the ability and potential to achieve great things means being aware that the choices they make today can affect them for life. Encourage students to make wise choices and always practice what they have been taught in *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*.

Unit Two



*“Everyone makes choices every day—
make sure you can live with your choices
for the rest of your life.”*

~The Peaceful Solution

Chapter Seven

My Choices And My Future

Introduction

Every day you make choices. These choices can come in many forms. Some choices are simple, for instance, deciding what color T-shirt to wear to school. Some choices are more important. For example, a friend could ask you to skip class or shoplift an item just to see if you could get away with it. Some choices could mean the difference between life and death, such as experimenting with drugs or alcohol.

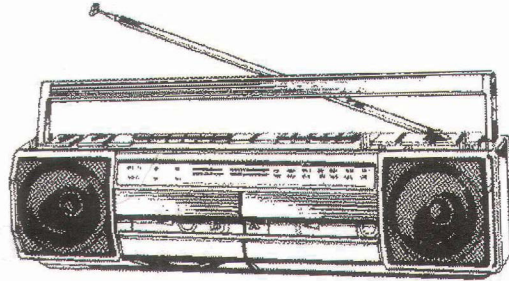
Accepting that your life has meaning and worth, that you are a unique individual, can help you weigh the consequences of the choices you make. Having a purpose and realistic goals will enable you to withstand many negative influences. Practicing what you learned in this program will help you make positive, moral choices.

In this final chapter of the “**Acceptance**” unit you will learn that you have the power to control the choices you make. You will also explore the outcome of both negative and positive choices in your life.

What bearing will your choices have on your future? You can determine the answer if you apply what you learn in *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*.

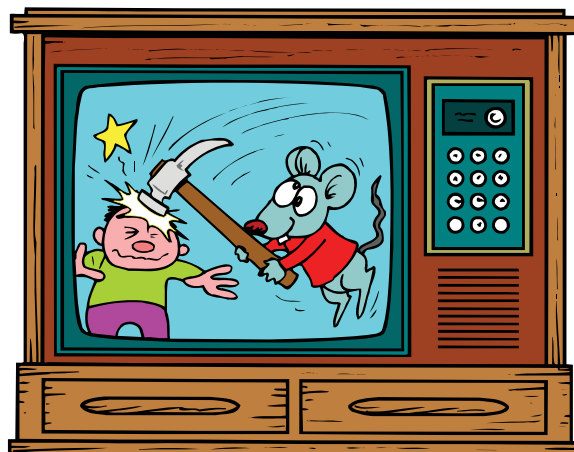
Influences Are Everywhere

An influence is anything that affects the way we think, our interaction with others and the choices we make. Whether or not you are aware of it, you are constantly being bombarded by various influences. Every time we turn on the TV, we are being influenced by the shows and commercials that we see.



Advertisers are very aware of how we are influenced. They promote their products in the most enticing way possible in order to persuade us to buy their merchandise. Advertisers also play on our need to be accepted and to fit in. Commercials seem to say if you dress a certain way, walk a certain way, eat certain foods, and look a certain way you will be cool; you'll fit in and you will be accepted.

Of course, TV is not the only influence. We are also influenced by movies, songs, the internet, magazines, books, friends and family, just to name a few. Some of these influences are clearly negative, some are clearly positive and others are a combination of both. Regardless of what form they come in, it is up to you to determine how these influences affect you, your ability to make positive choices, and the bearing they will have on your future.



Know The Difference

Have you ever heard of the age of accountability? This simply means that although you are not yet an adult, you have arrived at an age where you are responsible for what you think, say and do, and for the decisions you make. Knowing the difference between positive and negative influences can help you to make choices that you will not regret. If you make a poor choice because of how you allow yourself to be influenced, and you choose not to follow values as you learn from *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*, you will have no one to blame but yourself, because you are at the age of accountability.

Here Is How You Can Tell The Difference Between Positive And Negative Influences

Positive Influences

- Encourage and motivate you to make honest, moral choices that demonstrate self-respect and respect for others.
- Encourage and motivate you to pursue positive goals.
- Encourage and motivate you to develop a positive moral character.

Negative Influences

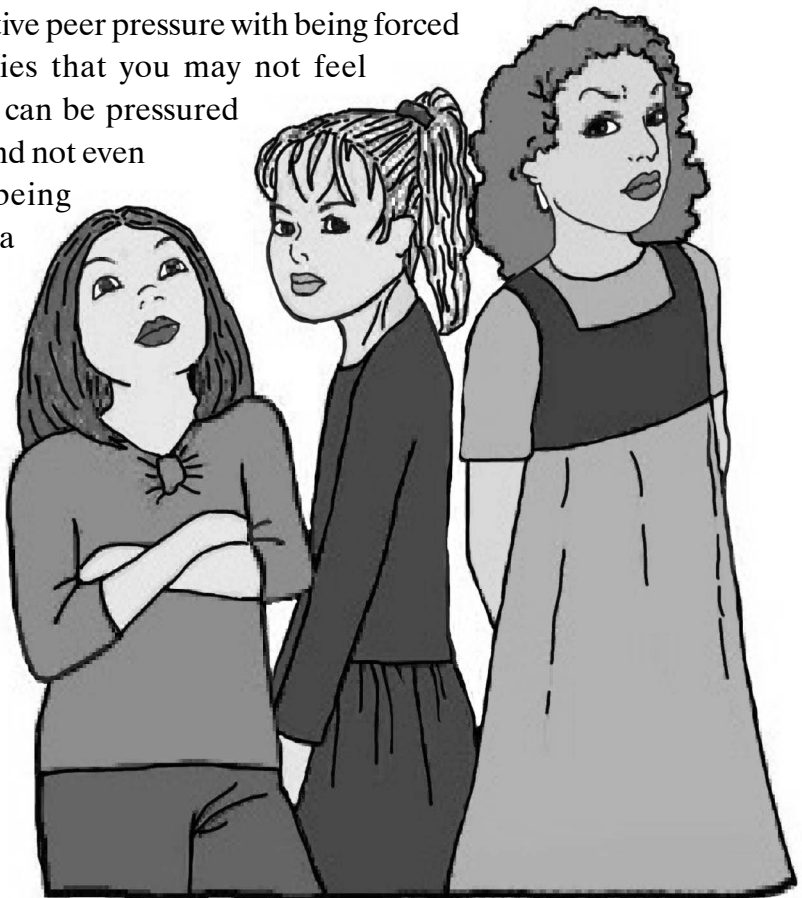
- Encourage dishonest, immoral choices that can sway you to compromise your self-respect by engaging in activities such as premarital sex, underage drinking and illegal drug use. They can also encourage violence, aggression, as well as, criminal activities.
- Encourage you to pursue negative goals that could cause harm to yourself and others.
- Encourage the development of negative character traits, such as retaliation, aggression and hatred.



The Influence Of Negative Peers

In the lesson on friends, you learned about the importance of choosing friends who have a positive moral character and some of the barriers to forming friendships. Because friendships are such an important part of your life right now, it is crucial that you are aware that friends have a powerful influence on each other. Although this influence can be positive, it is often negative. Negative influences, in the form of peer pressure, can lead to risk taking behavior such as experimentation with drugs, alcohol, premarital sex and crime. Keep in mind that negative peer pressure occurs when you feel pressured by so-called friends to do things you know are wrong in order to feel accepted. This means that a true friend would not try to influence you to do wrong. Also keep in mind that you must lead others. You are the person who has learned *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*. You can now lead others; so, try to influence your friends towards honest, moral behavior, instead of allowing them to influence you.

Don't confuse negative peer pressure with being forced to take part in activities that you may not feel comfortable with. You can be pressured into doing something and not even realize that you are being influenced to make a choice. For example, you get permission to visit your friend. While at his house he offers you a cigarette he stole. When you refuse he shrugs his shoulder and says, "Yeah, alright, if you think you're better than me." How would his response make you feel? Notice he did not tell you to smoke it. He simply



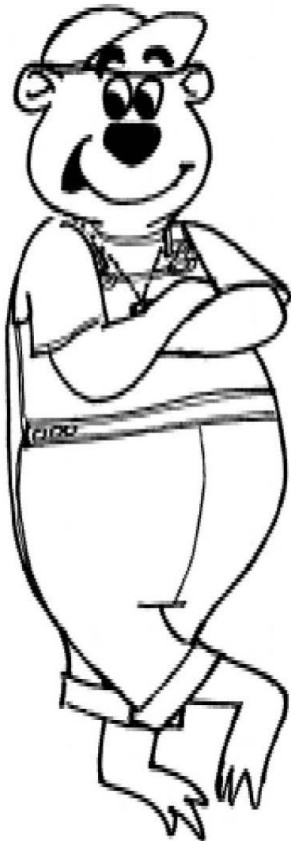
implied that if you did not take the cigarette you would be conceited or stuck up.

Another example of how subtle peer pressure can be is if during school your friends ask you to skip class and go to the local arcade. You think about it and then refuse. They reply, “Oh come on, don’t be such a drag. Don’t you know all work and no play will make you dull and boring? Come on let’s go. We’ll be back before Math class.” How would their response make you feel? Will you be more or less inclined to stay in school or go to the arcade?

Standing up to these forms of negative influences can be difficult especially when you care about what your friends think about you. But here is something else you should care about: your ability to resist negative influences and make choices that are positive, moral and beneficial.

Negative peer pressure has been around a long time. You don’t have to become involved with negative peers to recognize a wrong choice. You can learn from the mistakes of others.

Above all, what you learn now will guide you and keep you safe and healthy all of your life, so don’t let anyone stop you from pursuing knowledge.



Bear This In Mind

“When dealing with negative influences, the first choice you should make is to exercise your self-control. If you choose to go along with the crowd, only you will be held accountable for your actions.”

Self Control

The need to be accepted should never override great judgment. Remember, you have your entire life ahead of you. You have the potential to make a difference in the world around you. Sometimes you might feel that if you don't go along with the crowd you will be



left standing alone. There are people who would rather risk their health, self-respect and futures than risk losing their friends, mainly because they feel insecure about themselves. If you are ever faced with having to choose between a negative influence and doing what is morally correct,

STOP, THINK AND ASK yourself the following questions:

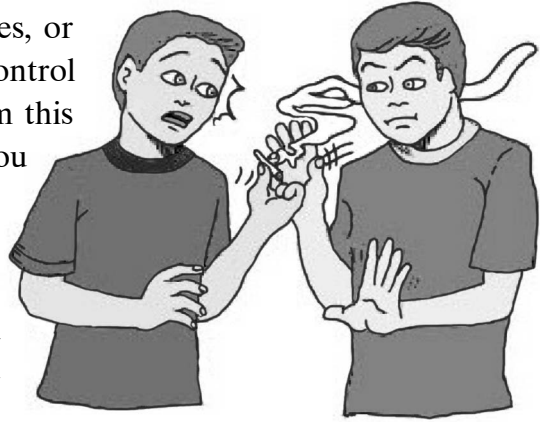
1. What negative consequences could result from my actions?
2. Do I feel pressured to make a choice that I am not comfortable with?
3. Will this choice cause me or my family embarrassment?
4. Can it affect my health and well-being or the health and well-being of someone else?
5. If it wasn't for my friends, would I be faced with making this choice?
6. If I stand strong and pursue the lessons I have learned from *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* will I gain other friends more suitable than those who try to pressure me to do things that are wrong?

When you stop, think and ask yourself these questions before deciding on a course of action and then proceed on a choice that is respectful of yourself and others, you are using self-control. Keep in mind that self-control is the ability to carefully consider a situation before making a decision.

Using self-control means not acting impulsively. In other words, don't make choices based only on emotions. As human beings we have the great and awesome ability to think, reason and consider. This is why we are the most intelligent beings on Earth.

Here Are Some Situations In Which You Can Exercise Your Self-control To Help You Make Moral Choices

1. If someone offers you drugs, cigarettes, or glue and gasoline to sniff, use your self-control and the knowledge you have gained from this program to guide you and say, “No.” You don’t have to go into a long explanation, just say “no” and mean it. Think about the damage it can do to you physically, mentally and emotionally. Life is filled with challenges that you will only be able to handle if you can think clearly and are in the best of health. So don’t do anything to yourself that is going to lessen your opportunity to reach your full potential.



2. If someone tries to encourage you to engage in any pre-marital sexual behavior, use your self-control and say “No!” In fact, set your mind in advance to avoid certain situations where you are alone with someone of the opposite sex until you are ready for marriage and a family. You can also use self-control to avoid touching others. Lack of self-control has caused many people to be put in prison for sexual harassment. It is against the law and can get you into a lot of trouble.

Let’s face it. We live in a society where sex seems to be everywhere—on TV, in songs, and in the movies. Most of the time they fail to mention the diseases that go with following this sexual pattern. One President said this risky sexual pattern is only for the uneducated because of the risk of getting AIDS and all the other diseases. At your age, there really are other things to talk about and other things to focus on besides sex. Have you ever heard the saying that it is better to be safe than sorry? Using self-control, the knowledge you have learned through education

and avoiding sex outside of marriage will keep you safe rather than sorry. Why make choices you will regret for the rest of your life?



3. Use self-control and the lessons from this program when faced

with the choice to engage in any form of criminal activity which is the willful destruction of another's property, graffiti, and breaking windows and mailboxes are not recreational sports, nor are they funny. Another way in which you can use self-control is to avoid taking or even touching someone's possessions without his or her permission. This is called stealing. You have things you own and value. You wouldn't want someone to take or borrow your belongings without your permission, so keep your hands off someone else's.



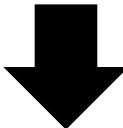
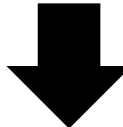
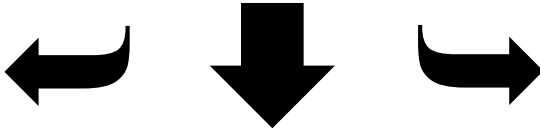
4. Use self-control when faced with the choice to be aggressive. Aggression leads to violence and violence only leads to more violence. Such negative behavior never solves conflict but rather increases it. By practicing self-control when faced with feelings of anger, frustration, resentment or hurt, you will find yourself feeling satisfied that you kept control and handled the situation positively.



A Lack Of Self-Control=Big Problems

If you do not use the knowledge you gain and practice self-control, then negative influences can lead to bad choices. These bad choices can result in risky behaviors. **Risk** means *to expose yourself to danger, injury, loss or peril*. Think about it this way, behaving in a risky way is like playing in traffic and hoping a car won't hit you!

Complete the chart below stating the harmful effects these risky behaviors can result in. All risky behaviors have the potential to cause serious injury or death.

Outcomes of Negative Influences		
		
Bad Choices		
		
Risk Taking/Experimentation		
		
Premarital Sex	Drug And Alcohol Abuse	Crime
<i>Example: Abortions</i>	<i>Example: Behavioral problems</i>	<i>Example: Violence</i>
<i>STDs</i>	<i>Poor grades</i>	<i>Theft</i>
<i>Unwanted pregnancy</i>	<i>Depression</i>	<i>Rape</i>
<i>Depression</i>	<i>Overdose</i>	<i>Murder</i>
<i>Date Rape</i>	<i>Date rape</i>	<i>Vandalism</i>
<i>Bad reputation</i>	<i>Diseases (dirty needles, shared pipes)</i>	<i>Accidents</i>
<i>Death</i>	<i>Death</i>	<i>Death</i>

To Do Or Not To Do It's Your Choice

There are literally thousands of young men and women who have ruined their health in just one night. They acted impulsively, gave in to their emotions, made a poor choice and got a STD. They are now dying a slow, agonizing death. This way of life is not for you. Many young people are faced with making decisions, whether or not to have premarital sex, take drugs, abuse alcohol or maybe even become involved in some form of criminal activity. These are all risky behaviors. Here are logical reasons why you must avoid these behaviors.

1. Girls: Don't feel pressured to have sex because your friends are or because the boy you like says, "If you love me you'll have sex with me." Don't fall for this type of negative influence. Engaging in sexual behavior puts you at risk for sexually transmitted diseases. This includes HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. You are also at risk for pregnancy. Babies born to teenage mothers suffer greater health risks and are at more risk of being abused. Sexual behaviors could also earn you a reputation of being "easy." Once this type of reputation is earned it is very difficult to be seen as anything else.



2. Boys: If your buddies are telling you that you must have sex to be a man then you should ask yourself if they are really your buddies. If a girl is pressuring you to have sex with her, you should ask yourself if it's worth the price you could end up paying. You are putting yourself at risk for sexually transmitted diseases, such as AIDS. Don't let yourself be influenced into doing something you will regret. If you get someone pregnant, you are just as responsible.



3. Alcohol and drugs are affecting children at an earlier age. Addiction to these mind-altering substances can affect you for life. If anybody tells you that you won't get addicted by trying drugs just once, tell them they are wrong and then walk away. The fact is, just one time can even kill you. Accepting yourself as a unique individual, full of promise and potential, means not taking risks that could affect your ability to think and to function. Addiction to any substance means that you are no longer in control of yourself. In other words, the addiction and the need to get the next high are the factors influencing your choices. Be educated, be courageous, be wise, care about yourself and choose not to get involved in drugs.

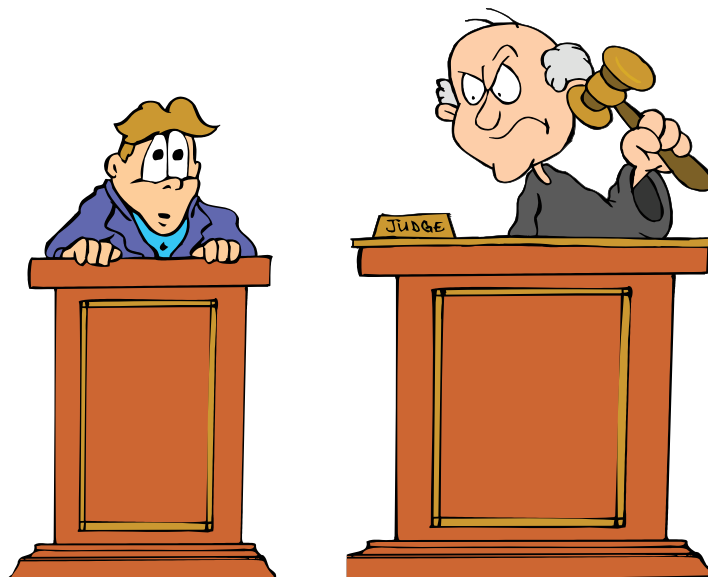


4. Don't be influenced to break the law. Shoplifting, trespassing, vandalism or getting involved in any illegal activity can lead to detrimental results. This is a choice that could have serious legal consequences. Legal consequences mean police, court, community service or detention centers. Please don't think it can't occur to you, or that you won't get caught. Juvenile detention centers are filled with young people who thought it couldn't occur to them. An illegal choice not only affects you but it will also affect the person who has been victimized. Innocent people and their property suffer because of crime. Read the following article.

One Victim's Tale

Once I was in a fast-food restaurant at a train station buying a hamburger. For a split second, I stupidly left my wallet on the counter as I turned around to get some catsup {ketchup}. Needless to say, my wallet was gone by the time I turned back. Had the thief thought about me? Did he stop for a second to wonder how I'd feel, how I'd get home? No, because he was simply thinking about what he wanted... and ... how to get it without being caught.

—*Raising a Thinking Preteen* by Mirna B. Shure, PhD, pages 137-138



*Stop, think and make the right choice.
The choice you make today can affect you for the rest of your life.*

Get The Facts

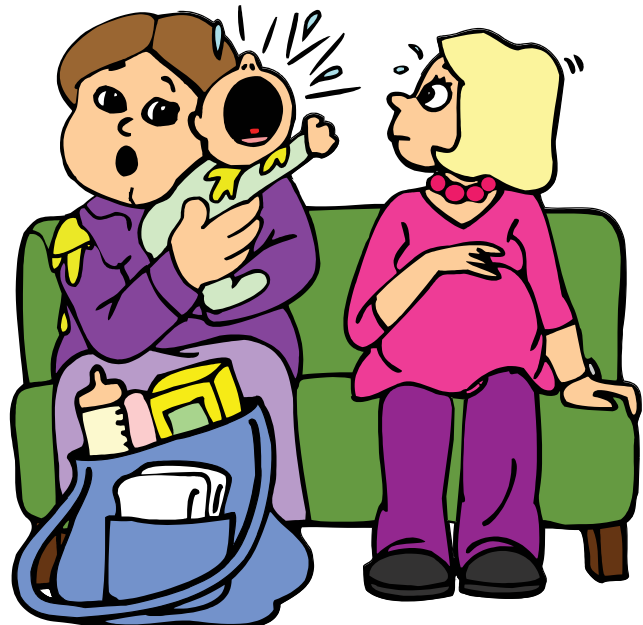
Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) causes AIDS, which stands for Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome. AIDS is practically common among young people. One fifth of all the people in the United States who have AIDS are in their twenties. These people were most likely infected with HIV in their teens. AIDS has no cure. Most people eventually die.

STD's are sexually transmitted diseases. An STD can be acquired by having sex just once with someone who is infected. About three million teens acquire an STD each year. These diseases can cause problems for the rest of a person's life.

Many things influence sexual activity among teens. Peers can pressure teens into early sexual activity. Some youth engage in sex because they fear rejection if they don't do it. Others may fear physical or sexual violence if they refuse.

Fifty-five percent of teens believe an unplanned pregnancy was the result of having sex while drinking or on drugs. They may not even remember having sex.

Each year 40,000 girls drop out of school because they become pregnant.



The following article tells one of the thousands of true stories of someone who made a bad choice, risked taking drugs and suffered the ultimate consequence.

Read the article then answer the questions that follow.

Bad Choices Led to Teenager's Death

SUPERIOR – The party began at 7 p.m. last Saturday in a suburban home. About 30 teenagers were celebrating Brittney Chambers' 16th birthday with a 12-pack of Corona, a bottle of Captain Morgan's Rum and some Mickey's Fine Malt Liquor. At least four of the teens, including Brittney, partied with four shamrock-shaped pills.

Six days later, five of Brittney's former Monarch High School classmates may face felony charges, and the party's guest of honor is dead.

The pills, thought to be the designer drug, Ecstasy, were a gift for Brittney, who looked forward to getting her driver's license and sitting behind the wheel of a new, red convertible.

At \$25 each, the drugs were easy to come by. A day before the party, three of Brittney's friends decided to buy a special gift for her.

During first period at Monarch High, a girl passed a note to Rebecca "Becky" Sheffield, asking if she had any ecstasy.

"I said 'yes,' and she then said that she knew a girl who would like to buy four," Sheffield, 18, said in a written statement for sheriff's deputies.

Sheffield's classmates told her to look for a tall, blonde in the B-wing after the first class. Sheffield, that girl, and a shorter blonde ducked into a bathroom, where the two girls gave Sheffield \$100 in \$20, \$10, \$5 and \$1 bills.

After the drug transaction in the school bathroom, one of the blond girls kept the green shamrocks until the birthday party the following night at the Superior home of Brittney's mother and her mother's husband.

About two hours into the party, Brittney, the two blondes and another friend swallowed the tablets. Brittney ingested half a pill.

Preston Chambers told reporters earlier this week that his sister wasn't feeling the euphoria

that the so-called "love drug" is supposed to induce. About 11 p.m., she took the other half.

Shortly after that, Brittney was vomiting in an upstairs bathroom. Her mother, Marcie Chambers, called 911 sometime after 1 a.m. During the next six days Marcie Chambers would sit by her daughter's hospital bedside, praying for a response from the girl. Friends, family members and well-wishers gathered in the intensive care unit's waiting room.

"Brittney has everything to live for," Preston Chambers said. "She's highly motivated," he said, "an honor student who talked openly with her mother about drugs."

On Friday afternoon, Brittney's family made the anguished decision to take her off life support. At 1:18 p.m., Brittney's young life slipped away.

The hospital waiting room, which was filled with hope the day before, was a scene of tears and mourning. About 30 of the teenager's friends and relatives braced themselves against the hospital walls. Some slumped in chairs outside the ICU. Others embraced one another...

The news of Brittney's death quickly spread throughout the Monarch High School campus... drug awareness ribbons were passed out to students.

Earlier in the week, Preston Chambers said, "Everybody occasionally makes bad choices, not fully understanding the possible outcomes."

Detectives said the choices made during the last week led to the arrests of three of Brittney's friends, the girl who passed a note, Sheffield and [her fiancée] Schuerger.

The choices also ended Brittney's life and her dream of driving a red convertible.

By Pam Regensberg
www.thedailycamera.com

Answer the following questions.

1. What was the bad choice that Brittney made? (Using drugs.)

2. At what point could Brittney have stopped and reconsidered to change the outcome of her decision?

(At the point when plans were being made to organize a party of that nature.)

3. What were the consequences of her choice?

(Her death and the arrest of her friends.)

4. Is it too late for Brittney to change the outcome of her bad choice?

Why or why not?

(Yes, because she died.)

Brittney lost sight of her goals and she made a choice that took her life. Don't lose sight of your goals. Your entire future is ahead of you. Yes, others are doing drugs, thousands of others and they are all suffering. No one who does drugs is safe.

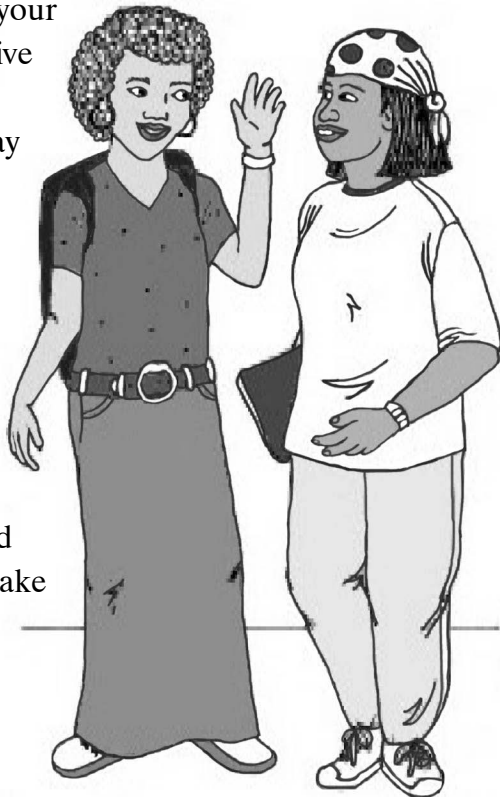
Make A Right Choice

Whenever you are faced with a choice, consider the consequences of your actions, consider the goals that you have set for yourself, and then make a decision that will **NOT**:

- Bring harm to yourself.
- Bring harm to others.
- Jeopardize your positive goals.
- Risk your life.

A right choice is a choice that causes no harm to yourself or others. It takes into consideration the consequences of your actions. If your friends do not respect your decision to make a right choice then consider whether they are really behaving as true friends. Remember, a friend is someone who respects you and allows you to be an individual. They help you to achieve your goals and support and encourage your positive moral choices.

Sometimes, making a right choice may mean dealing with rejection. As devastating as losing a friend might be, it is far more devastating to make a choice that could affect you for life. If you are rejected for making a right choice, console yourself with the fact that your choice may have saved your life and your positive example may encourage someone else to make a right choice. Pat yourself on the back and use your skills in healthy interactions to make new friends. Who knows, you may even get your old friends back when they realize how courageous and positive you are.



Goals Worksheet

Keeping your mind focused on what you want to achieve in life will help you resist negative influences. Positive long and short-term goals based on moral principles will give your life purpose and direction.



Fill in the goals worksheet.

List Three Goals

1. Example: Develop a healthy lifestyle.

2. _____

3. _____

What Right Choices Can You Make To Help You Achieve Your Goals?

1. Enroll in an exercise program and take a class on diet and nutrition.
Replace soda, artificial flavors, colors and processed foods with more natural ones.

2. _____

3. _____

Be Prepared When The Heat Is On

Learning to solve problems in a positive moral way is a sign of maturity. To solve problems positively requires evaluating your options and making the right decision. Making a right choice requires determination and practice. You have to set your mind in advance to stand up for what is moral and proper, even if it means standing alone. By setting your mind in advance, and by using the knowledge you have gained, you can avoid making choices that could ruin your future and your life. Be prepared to give the right answer based on the right choice. Act out the following skits as a means of practicing making right choices.

Role Play #1

Narrator: Althea was walking home from school when Jeremy approached her and tried influencing her, using sexual innuendos.

Jeremy: Hey girl, what's up? Where are you going, sweet thing?

Althea: I'm going home.

Jeremy: Well, do you want to take a detour to my house? My parents won't be home until eight.

Althea: For what?

Jeremy: So we can get to know each other better.

Questions For Discussion

Answer the following questions based on the scenario above.

1. Identify the problem. *(The problem is that she would be alone with someone of the opposite sex, and she is being sexually harassed.)*

2. List a negative choice Althea could make and the consequence: *(Althea could agree to go with Jeremy to his home. He could rape her, she could become pregnant or get an STD.)*

3. Suggest two positive moral choices Althea could make: *(Althea could walk away without making a reply. Althea could tell Jeremy to stop sexually harassing her and walk away.)*



Role Play #2

Narrator: Preston and Jay are attending summer school for failing Math class last year. During lunch break, Preston asks Jay:

Preston: Hey, man, do you want a smoke?

Jay: I don't smoke.



Preston: No, man, I don't mean that kind, it's a joint. Come on, I know where we can smoke it; there's a couple of guys waiting for us there.

Questions For Discussion

Answer the following questions based on the scenario above.

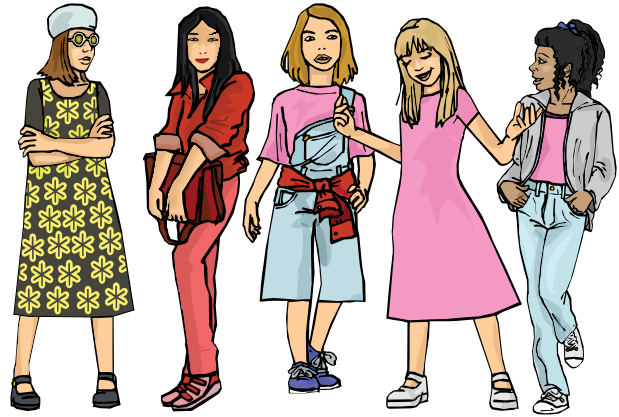
1. Identify the problem. (*Preston wants Jay to smoke marijuana. He is also trying to get him to skip school.*)

2. List a negative choice Jay could make and the consequence: (*Jay could agree to go with Preston and smoke the joint. He could be caught leaving school and be in trouble with the school and his parents. If he did drugs, he could harm his mind and body.*)

3. What are two positive moral choices Jay could make? (*Jay could say: "Hey, I thought you were smarter than this? You know this is the same reason we're in summer school. We were always fooling around when we should have been in class. I'm not going. I don't want to be a dropout. Being here already taught me a lesson." Jay could say "no" and walk away.*)

Role Play #3

Narrator: Sheena was at the mall with her new friends, Tara (the leader of the group), Rebecca, Melissa and Candace. Sheena has always thought these girls were really cool. She'd been longing for the day she would hang out with them. While they were at the mall, Sheena was faced with some tough choices.



Tara: Look at that sweater! Oh my word, I've got to have it.

Rebecca: Yeah, it's tight, but you already spent all your money.

Tara: Do any of you guys have any more money?

Sheena and Melissa: No.

Tara: I really want this sweater. I've got to have it! Hey, will you guys keep a look out for me?

Narrator: Sheena looks in shock as she sees Tara preparing to put the sweater into her bag. The other girls are looking around.

Questions For Discussion

Answer the following questions based on the scenario above.

1. Identify the problem: (Sheena has made a bad choice of friends and is now in the middle of seeing someone steal.)
2. List a negative choice Sheena could make and the consequence: (Sheena could go along with Tara and be an accomplice to theft. They could be caught and arrested. They could be taken to the police station and her parents notified.)
3. List two positive moral choices Sheena could make: (Sheena could tell Tara that stealing is wrong and walk away quickly. Sheena could tell Tara that stealing is wrong and she needed to put it back, otherwise she would report her to the store manager.)

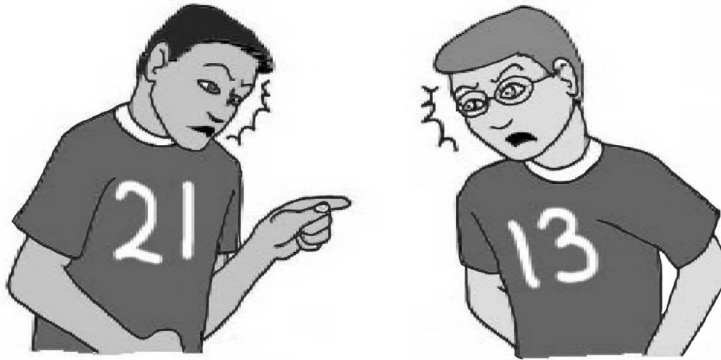
Role Play # 4

Narrator: Rodriguez and David were playing on the same basketball team. Suddenly David accidentally bumped into Rodriguez.

Rodriguez: Man, watch where you're going! I thought glasses were to help you see better!

David: Hey, maybe you need to borrow my glasses so you can see where you're going!

Narrator: Rodriguez and David are escalating in a conflict and it looks like they might start a fist fight.



Questions For Discussion

Answer the following questions based on the scenario above.

1. Identify the problem.

(David and Rodriguez are in a conflict in the middle of a basketball game.)

2. List a negative choice any of the boys could make and the consequence.

(They could yell at each other or even end up in a fist fight. The consequence would be that someone could get hurt, and both could be dismissed from the game.)

3. What two positive moral choices could they make?

(They could apologize to one another and continue playing the game. They could just walk away from the situation to cool down.)

What I Have Learned

- We are all born with certain physical traits that we have no control over.
- Rather than stress over the size of my nose, height or shoe size, I will instead focus on what I can control like my attitude, my future, my health and how I treat others.
- Accepting myself as a unique individual helps me to appreciate the uniqueness in others.
- What's important is how we are on the inside. It is the color of a person's character that matters, not the color of his or her skin.
- Having learned to accept others and myself, I now know the importance of having healthy interactions.
- Healthy interaction is a direct result of proper communication.
- Respectfully using my words, as well as being aware of my tone of voice, facial expressions and body language when interacting with others, can lead to strong, positive, honest, moral relationships.
- These skills in communication can enable me to choose positive, encouraging friends with the same moral character.
- I must choose friends who are interested in moral values as we learn from *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*, in order to avoid negative peer pressure and conformity.
- My ability to help others and make a difference in their lives give my life purpose.
- The knowledge that my life has meaning and value gives me a positive direction in which to grow and mature and teach others.
- Learning to set positive, honest, moral, realistic goals will help me to achieve my purpose in life and will also enable me to resist negative conformity.
- I accept that I am a unique individual with my future ahead of me. I will make choices that are positive and appreciate the life that I have been given.

**“Our society continues to advance in technology.
Are we doing the same in character or moral values?”
~The Peaceful Solution**

Enrichment Activities

1. Find newspaper articles describing bad choices. Share how a different choice could have made a difference in the outcome.
2. Interview an adult who was faced with a choice when he or she was young and how the right or wrong choice made a difference in his or her life.
3. Write the short and long-term goals you would like to accomplish and what you think your purpose in life is.



Further Reading

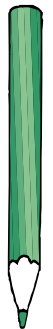
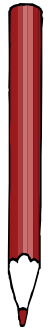
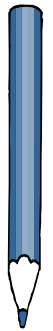
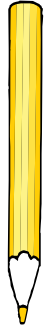
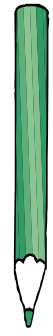
Romero's Problem

Read the following testimony and answer the questions that follow.

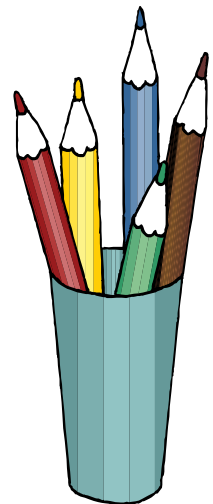
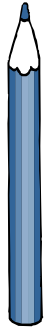
At school, Romero started to hang out with a new group of boys he had always thought were cool. One morning, one of the boys named Roger asked if Romero could hold on to a joint for him until lunchtime. Romero was not comfortable with the request but Roger kept urging him on by telling him they won't get caught. Finally, Romero agreed, because he didn't want to lose his cool new friends. He put the joint in his pocket. As they walked through the metal detector to get inside the school, the alarm went off. The security guard had them both go through the detector again. Roger was clear, but it went off again when Romero walked through it. Then Romero remembered that he had his brother's pocketknife. They had gone fishing the day before and he forgot to give it back to him. It was the knife that set off the metal detector. The security guard asked him to empty the contents of his pockets, and when he did, out fell the joint. The security guard picked up the joint and said, "Well, what do we have here?" Romero was shocked and said, "It's not mine!" Then the security guard said, "Then who's is it?" His eyes darted over to Roger hoping that he would claim his joint, but Roger turned around slowly and walked away.

Questions

1. Why did Romero take the joint? (Because he didn't want to lose his cool, new friends.)
2. Was Roger being a true friend to Romero when he urged him to hold the joint? Why or why not (No, a true friend does not encourage another to break any moral rule or law.)
3. When Romero was caught with the joint, what did Roger do? (Roger pretended that he didn't know Romero.)
4. Was this a sign of true friendship? (No.)



**IDENTIFYING
THE
DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN
POSITIVE AND
NEGATIVE
CHARACTER
TRAITS**

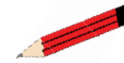


The Positive Side Of Character

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

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

Positive Character Traits



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

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

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

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

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

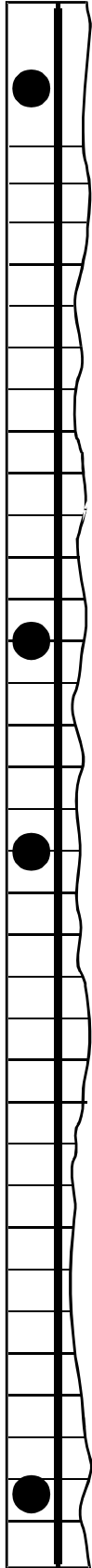
Being patient means not complaining, especially when you have the most to complain about. For example, your father promised to take you camping, but work kept interfering with the trip; you handled it without getting upset.

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

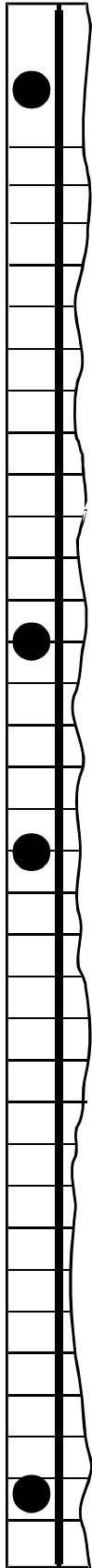
For example, Martha was determined to stop assisting Alicia in stealing school supplies at the mall. Martha had already explained to Alicia that stealing was wrong; so when Alicia came to pick Martha up, she said no and encouraged Alicia not to go either.

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

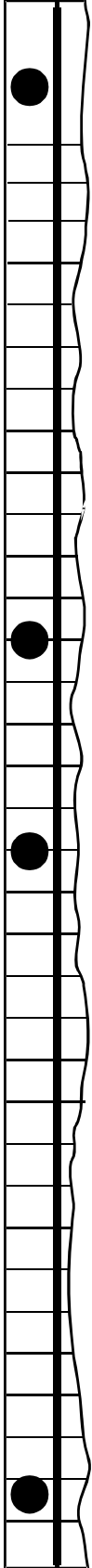
What Is A Negative Character?

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

Negative Character Traits

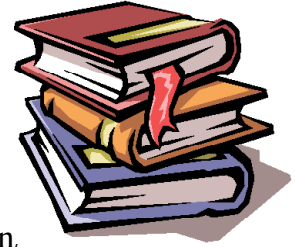


1. **Uneducated**—*Making a decision without getting all the facts.*
For example, your friends offer you some glue to sniff. You ask, "Won't that mess with my head?" Your friend replies, "No, it's safe and just makes you high." Without any further investigation, you agree.

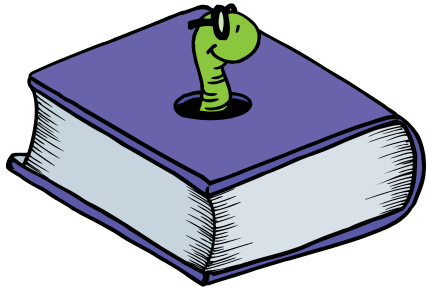


2. **Dishonest**—*To maliciously lie, cheat or steal.*
For example, you saw Paula take Marco’s dictionary without asking his permission. But when he asked about it, you said you had no idea because you just don’t like Marco.
3. **Revengeful/Unforgiving**—*To want to get even or get back at someone; results from not being able to forgive.*
For example, Sally lent Jen her new pen, but Jen lost it. Jen did apologize to Sally and offered to buy her a new pen, but Sally did not accept Jen’s apology. As soon as Jen got a new pen Sally took Jen’s pen when she wasn’t looking and broke it.
4. **Unreliable**—*When someone cannot be depended upon.*
For example, Jill had promised to assist you on your math project on two previous occasions, but never showed up. So when she volunteered to give you a ride to the library, you nicely refused.
5. **Impatient**—*To be restless or short-tempered and easily aggravated.*
People who are impatient are not willing to wait. They want everything right away and become frustrated when their desires are not met.
6. **Aggressive**—*Capable of violent physical or verbal outburst.*
Carlos stepped on Rick’s new shoes by mistake. Instead of waiting for Carlos to apologize, Rick immediately cursed him and pushed him against the wall.
7. **Disrespectful**—*Lacking care or concern for someone or something.*
For example, your dad told you it was time to do your chores. You got mad, went to your room and slammed the door.
8. **Hateful**—*An intense emotion that results in extreme dislike and hostility. Hate is derived from fear, anger or perceived injury.*
For example, some people are raised to believe that people who have a different skin color should be hated.

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Glossary

Addicted: *To cause to become compulsively and physiologically dependent on a habit-forming substance.*

Adolescence: *The period of physical and psychological development from the onset of puberty to maturity.*

Choice: *The act of choosing; selection, to select with care.*

Condone: *To overlook, forgive, or disregard (an offense) without protest or censure.*

Conform: *To agree with and obey customs and standards.*

Consequence: *Something that logically or naturally follows from an action or condition.*

Consideration: *Careful thought; deliberation.*

Derogatory: *Belittling.*

Destructive: *Causing or wreaking destruction; ruinous: a destructive act.*

Diplomatic: *Showing tact and sensitivity when dealing with others.*

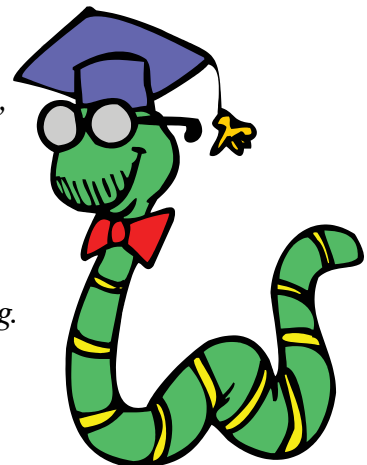
Discrimination: *Treatment or consideration based on class or category rather than individual merit; partiality or prejudice.*

Empathy: *To understand how others feel.*

Ethnicity: *Ethnic character, background, or affiliation, culture, religion with a common heritage.*

Euphoria: *A feeling of great joy or well-being.*

Experiment: *The act, process, or practice of experimenting. A task or trial undertaken to discover or demonstrate something.*



Friend: *Someone who supports you, respects and encourages you and accepts you as a unique individual.*

Goal: *The purpose toward which an endeavor is directed; an objective, intention, an end that one can strive to attain.*

Habitual: *Of the nature of a habit, chronic.*

Hate: *An intense hostility; extreme dislike.*

Illicit: *Unlawful.*

Impact: *The effect or impression of one thing on another.*

Influence: *A power affecting a person, thing, or course of events, especially one that operates without any direct or apparent effort.*

Intolerance: *Unwilling to accept those who are different from you.*

Nationality: *The status of belonging to a particular nation by origin, birth, or naturalization. A people having common origins or traditions and often constituting a nation.*

Racism: *The mistreatment of a group of people due to nationality and ethnicity.*

Rapport: *Relationship, especially one of mutual trust or care.*

Realistic: *To be sensible and practical.*

Respect: *To feel or show regard for; esteem.*

Risk: *The possibility of danger, injury, loss or peril.*

Setbacks: *Circumstances that interfere with attaining your goals.*

Self-control: *Control of one's emotions, desires or actions by one's own will.*

Stereotype: *An idea about a group of people that is based upon inaccurate generalizations.*

Superficial: *Concerned only with what is on the surface.*

Susceptible: *Easily influenced or affected.*

Vulnerable: *Easily hurt by criticism or attack.*

History of The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program

Pioneered by President Yisrayl Hawkins, the *Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* began in 1994 with parents and teachers who were disturbed that positive character development was rapidly deteriorating in our society. Their concern prompted them to embark on a mission to stop the decline and bring back positive social behaviors to society. President Yisrayl Hawkins, also Curriculum Director and Author of the *Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*, has been diligently presenting the *Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* to individuals, community representatives, as well as world leaders through books, forums, conferences, television and radio talk shows and international meetings.



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The Peaceful Solution Character Education Incorporated
P.O. Box 2442
Abilene, TX 79604

www.peacefulsolution.org
info@peacefulsolution.org

1-888-613-9494
1-325-672-9492
Fax: 1-325-677-9023