



*Peaceful Solution  
Character Education*  
PROGRAM



# CHARACTER

**To Change The Hearts And Minds**

# **The Peaceful Solution<sup>®</sup>**

*Character Education Program*



# **The Peaceful Solution<sup>®</sup>**

*Character Education Program*



## **Teacher's Manual** **Character Unit**

*By Yisrayl Hawkins*

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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.

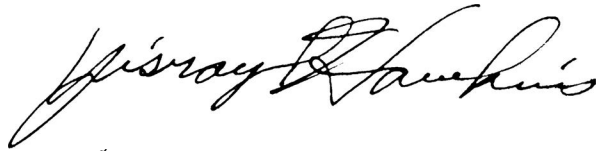
Reading *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* to any student will mean alot. Influencing the student with the personal determination to leave the classroom with the wisdom and knowledge found in these books will mean everything in the student’s life.

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 "Jisray R. Hopkins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "J".

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

This section of *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* consists of five units that cover *Character, Acceptance, Self-Control, Respect* and *Responsibility*. Each unit is designed and formatted to gently lead the student from 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 lesson. These lessons/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 ONE

## Character

### Introduction To The Unit

**W**e are all unique multifaceted individuals with many experiences, interactions and values that shape us into who we are. Even as adults, we are constantly finding out new things about ourselves, our abilities and our character. We currently live in a fast paced, highly advanced, technological society that literally bombards our children with many negative influences. Peers, the internet, movies and songs all have the potential to shape the outcome of their lives. Just as our many experiences have shaped our characters and personalities, so too are they shaping the character and personality of our children. And just what kind of person are they being shaped into? What do they value and how will the children of today shape our future world?

As educators and role models, these are questions that we must consider if we desire to stop the violence and risk taking behaviors that are destroying the lives of our children even before they have reached adulthood.

If you were to poll what students want for their futures, none of them would say they want to be the victim of a school shooting, or to contract HIV or a host of other sexually transmitted diseases that cripple or kill. On the contrary, they would say that they have hopes and dreams to pursue the career of their choice, to start families of their own, or to succeed in a healthy, joyous life. It is our responsibility as educators, parents and role models to give our children the skills and knowledge to resist negative influences and to attain a positive moral character to succeed in life. Let us begin to teach our children the lessons that will guide them for a lifetime. This can be accomplished by giving them a sound moral foundation through character education.

*The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* was designed to teach children the importance of having a positive moral character. They will learn how character is developed and

how it can be applied to improve every aspect of life. This program is presented in a clear, easy to read format that the eleven to thirteen year old will identify and connect with.

This first unit introduces students to what character is and how it compares to personality. Considering the problems that arise from mistaking a pleasant personality for a positive character, it is imperative that we teach children to differentiate between the two.

In addition to this, they will explore the role of character in producing a dysfunctional or healthy family. Numerous studies indicate that children who are abused grow up to be abusers themselves. The violence and hate that result from physical, sexual and emotional abuse are passed on from one generation to the next. This is our opportunity to teach children how to break the cycle of abuse so that the next generation can be healthy in both mind and body.

Other issues that will be presented in this unit are:

- How to identify and acquire positive values.
- The importance of distinguishing between positive and negative influences.
- How to develop positive leadership skills.
- How choices that are either positive or negative can ripple outwards and affect others.
- The benefits of a positive character in achieving a successful future and a satisfying life-style, without the everyday problems we see around us.

As teachers and educators, we have a great responsibility in preparing today's children for tomorrow's world. By learning why a positive character is important, they can avoid making choices that will negatively affect them for the rest of their lives. Who they will become and what they deem important, depend largely upon what they are taught today. It is the goal of *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* to teach children to develop a positive character and to build a better world, one person at a time.

# Chapter One

## More Than Meets The Eye

### Note To The Teacher

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

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

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

Other concepts that will be covered in this chapter are:

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

## *Unit One*

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

# Lesson Plan

## More Than Meets The Eye

### PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

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

### MATERIALS

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

### PROCEDURE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

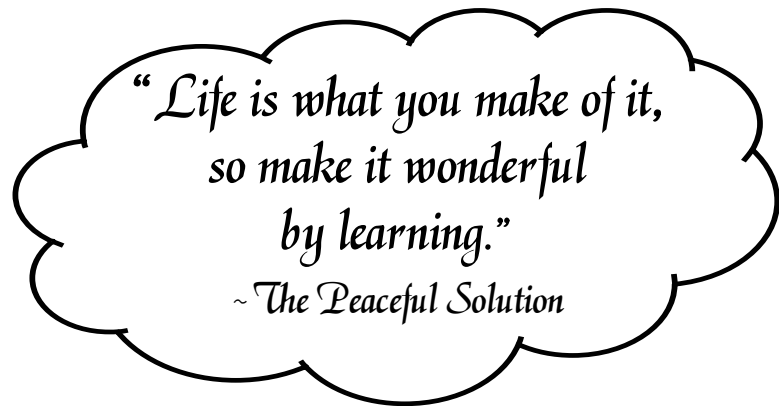
a. What are the dangers or drawbacks of choosing friends based only on personality? (*Answers will vary but may include that some of the dangers are that the values and beliefs may hinder my ability to make the right choices in life. Their character might also influence me to participate in the negative hobbies or extracurricular activities that they do.*)

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

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

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

*Unit One*



## Note To The Student

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

### A Few Sad Facts Of Life

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

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

## A Road Less Traveled

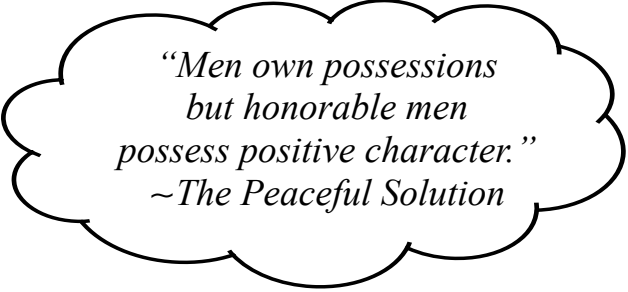
Here's what it all boils down to: You don't have to go this route. You can take a road less traveled. Now it may not be the most popular road or the road that your friends are taking, but, here is another fact. Life is about making choices. The choices you make, the ones that could save your life, will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

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

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



*No one is too young to choose the right path.*



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

# Chapter One

## More Than Meets The Eye

### Introduction

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

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

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

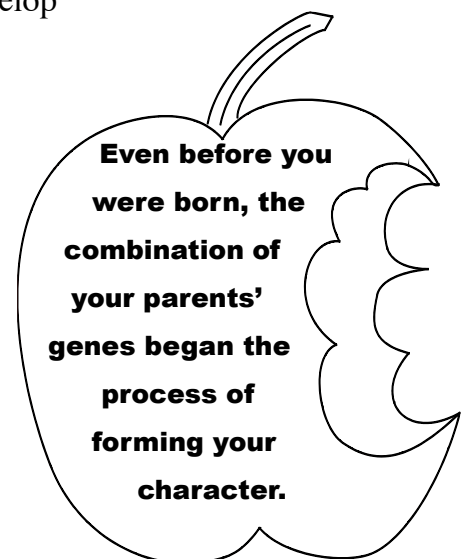
## Character...Everyone Has It But Where Does It Come From?

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

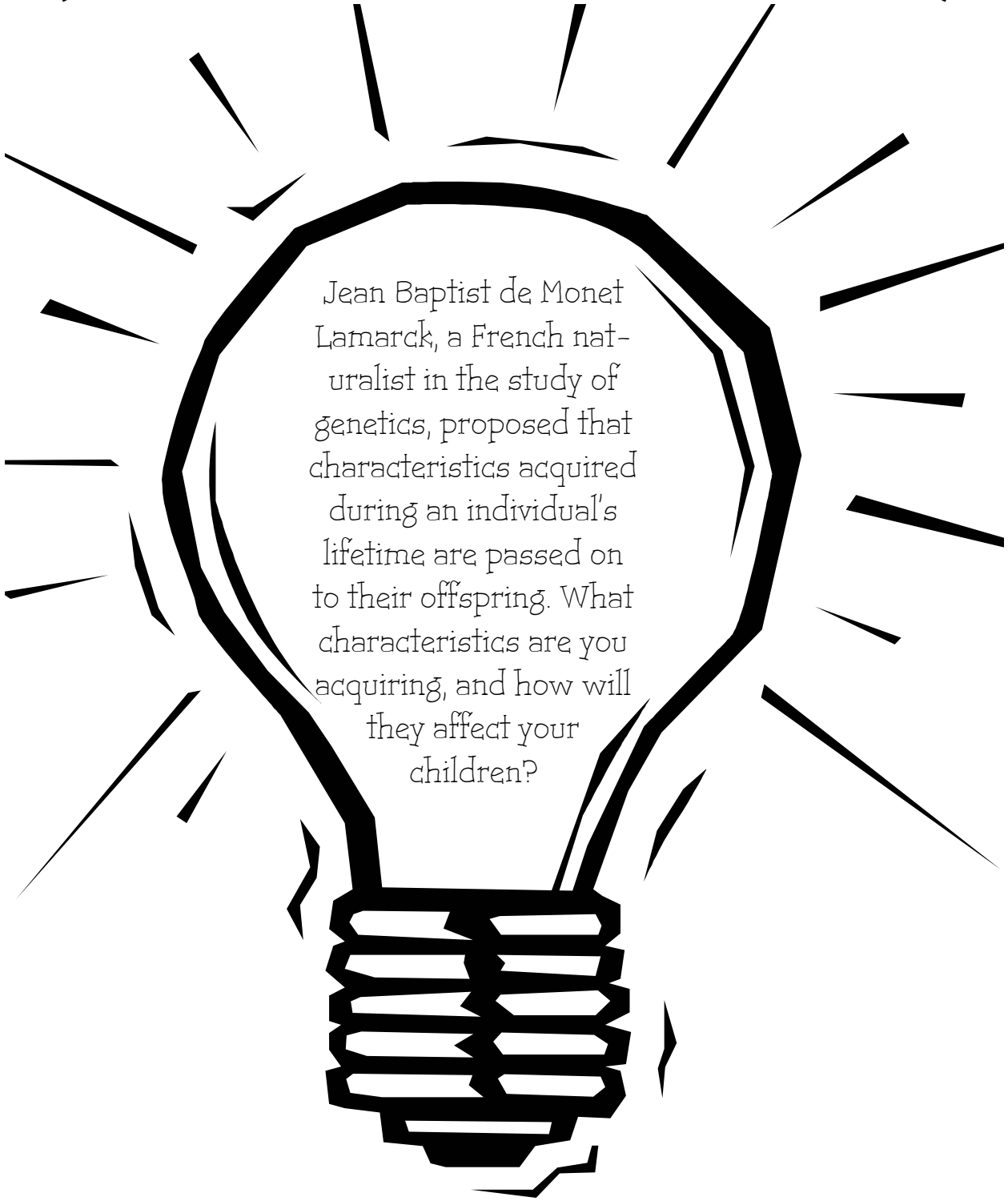
Through the study of genetics, science now knows that in addition to traits such as eye, hair, and skin color, individuals also inherit intelligence, musical abilities and specific behavioral patterns. These behavioral patterns make up what is known as your character and personality. Some traits like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

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

**Take a bite  
out of this:**



# THINK ABOUT IT



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

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

# Values

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

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



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

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

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

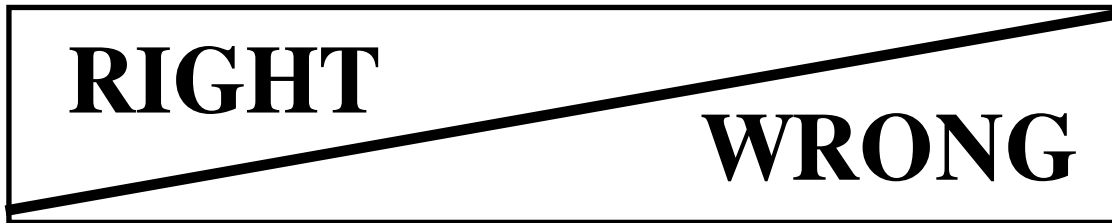
# Chew On This

Value what is  
positive in  
yourself and  
others.



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

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



### Morality Can Be Divided Into Three Basic Categories:

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

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

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

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

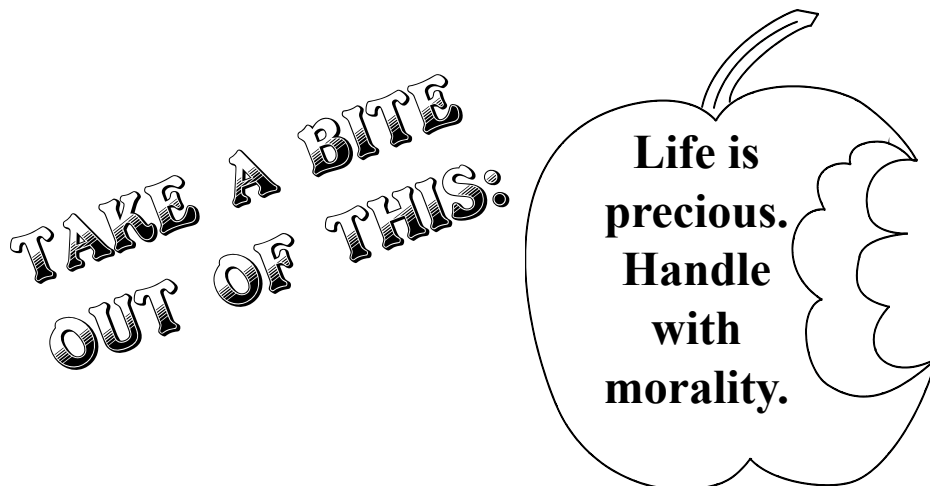
emotional and sexual abuse. Age, senility and dependency, usually upon the abuser himself, hinder an accurate count of the number of elderly who are abused each year.

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

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

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

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



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

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

authority and rights of ownership over his or her possessions as well. Respecting others rights benefits you, as well as them.

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

*Accept decisions others make concerning their belongings.*



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

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

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

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

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

## STRAIGHT TALK



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

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



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

## Here’s Something Else To Think About

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

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

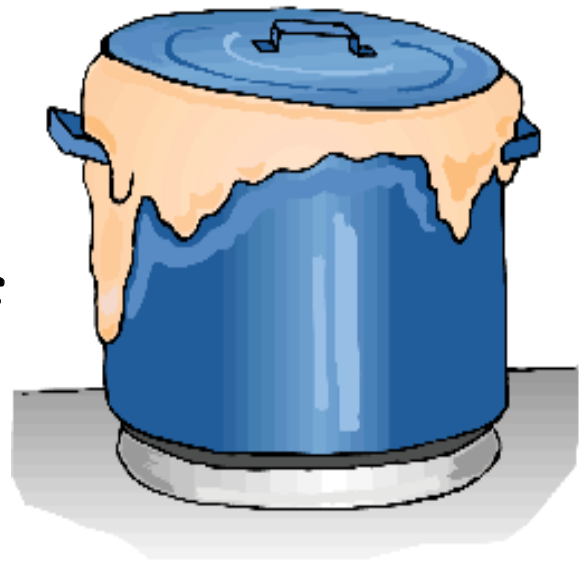
Aside from being cruel, vandalism is against the law. Many who choose this kind of behavior end up in jail or spend countless hours doing community service. Hey, destroying something that doesn't belong to you is not fun, is not right and is definitely not cool. It only leads to retaliation, retaliation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

**Retaliation**

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

## What It All Boils Down To...

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



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

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

# The Positive Side Of Character

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

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

## Positive Character Traits

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Honesty

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

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

## Responsibility

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

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

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



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

# **INTEGRITY**



# What Is A Negative Character?

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

## Negative Character Traits

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

“Negative character is the root of all the hate, violence and war we see in the world around us.”  
-The Peaceful Solution

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

5. **Impatient**—*To be restless or short-tempered and easily aggravated.*

People who are impatient are not willing to wait. They want everything right away and become frustrated when their desires are not met.

6. **Aggressive**—*Capable of violent physical or verbal outburst.*

Carlos stepped on Rick's new shoes by mistake. Instead of waiting for Carlos to apologize, Rick immediately cursed him and pushed him against the wall.

7. **Disrespectful**—*Lacking care or concern for someone or something.*

For example, your dad told you it was time to do your chores. You got mad, went to your room and slammed the door.

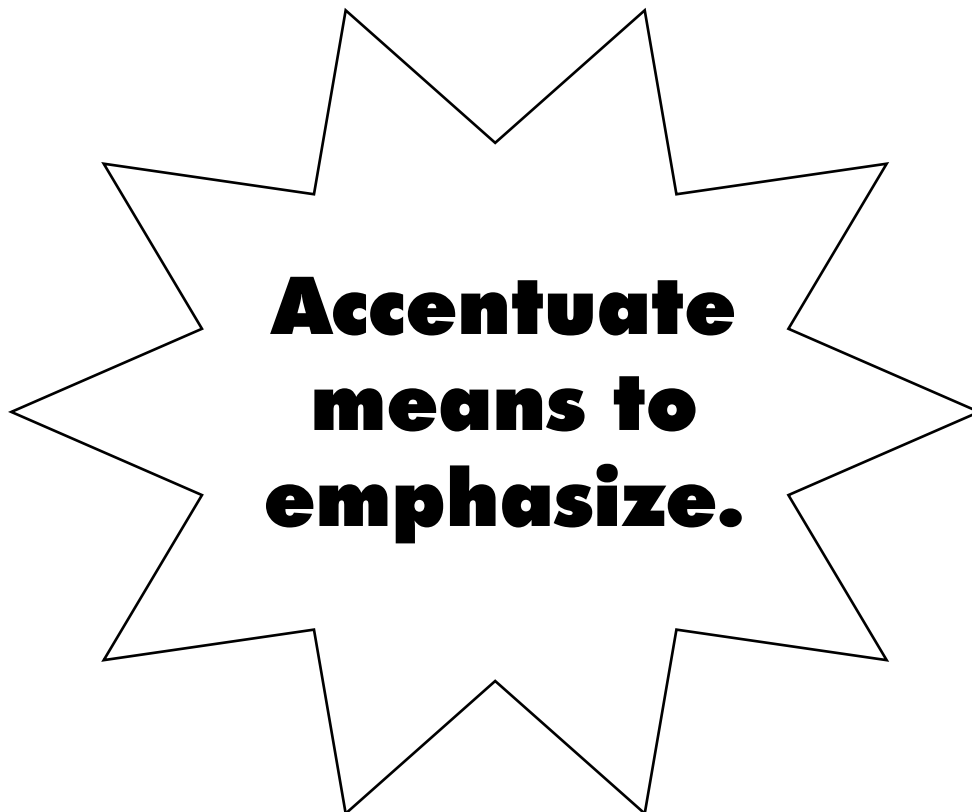
8. **Hateful**—*An intense emotion that results in extreme dislike and hostility. Hate is derived from fear, anger or perceived injury.*

For example, some people are raised to believe that people who have a different skin color should be hated.

## Don't Accentuate The Negative

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

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



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

**What I Would Like To Change**

*For example: I want to stop being aggressive.*

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**What I Can Do To Change**

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

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# What Is Personality?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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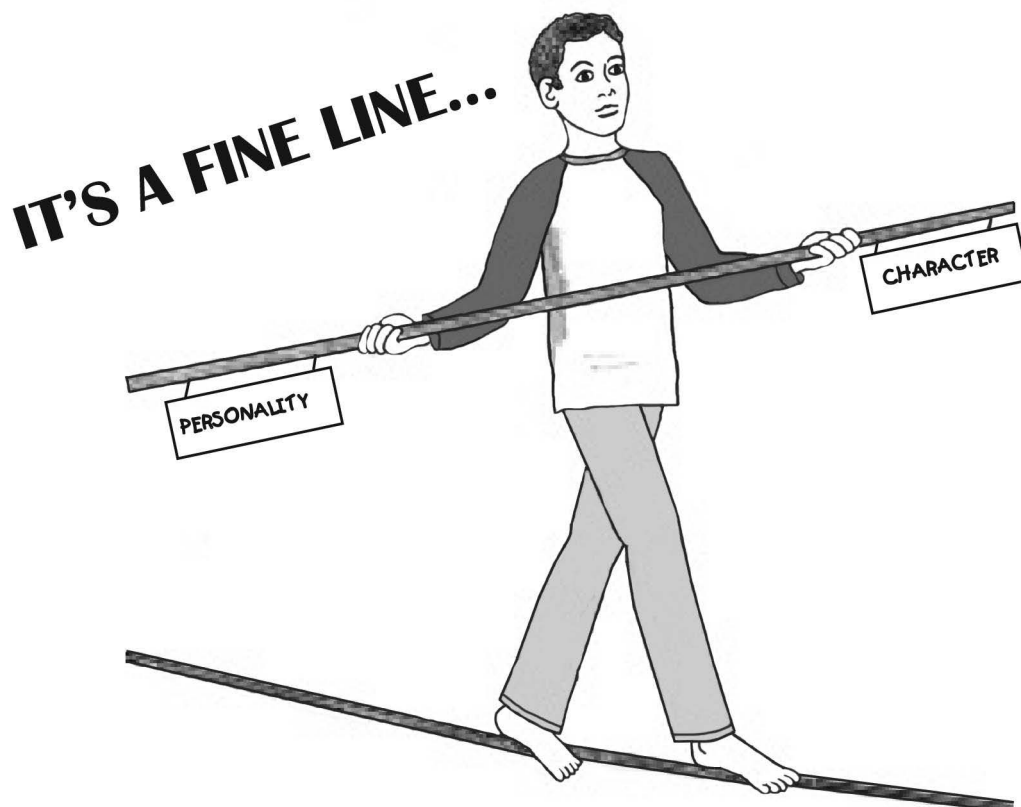
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## Character Versus Personality

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

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

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



## Kelly And Pam

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Answer the following questions.

1. What were some of Pamela and Kelly’s shared personality traits?  
They both were in the band, enjoyed pizza and chocolate ice cream.
2. Did the two girls have similar character traits? Explain your answer.  
No, one desired stealing, but the other didn't.
3. Using your list of positive character traits, what traits best describe Kelly’s character? Honest, trustworthy, disciplined, thoughtful, intelligent, etc.
4. What negative traits should Pamela eliminate from her character?  
Dishonest, unreliable, etc.
5. How do you think Kelly should handle the situation? She should continue to explain to her the error in stealing and the consequences that could occur.

Listen to the following poem.

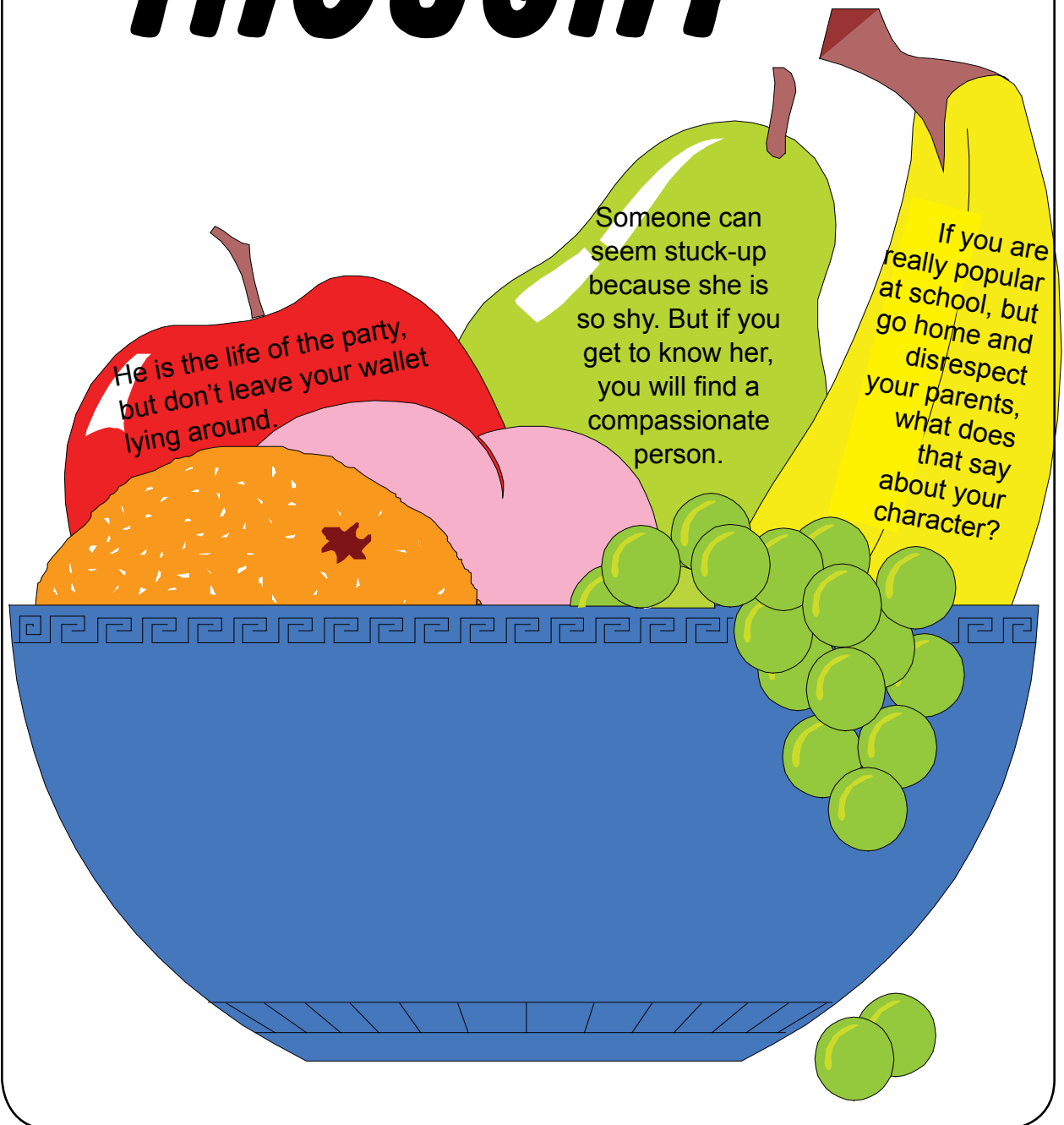
## Poem: More Than Meets The Eye

He seemed so kind, he seemed so nice,  
But his personality did not suffice.  
A positive character he did lack,  
Smiling in your face while stabbing you in the back.  
His smiles, jokes and playful grin  
Almost hid the negative character within.  
He spoke in a pleasant way,  
But his friends he did betray.  
With a devious mind and deceptive thought,  
He chose to steal what he hadn't bought.  
From someone he knew, who called him a friend  
He stole from him again and again.  
Until one day, his friend did say,  
"I don't want you here, now go away.  
You stole while you smiled at me.  
With your behavior I disagree.  
I thought I knew you,  
I thought we were tight,  
But your negative character,  
is just not right."



*Click to Play*

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT



## Here are a few things to think about...

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*“Observing someone’s actions reveals his or her true character.”*

*~ The Peaceful Solution*

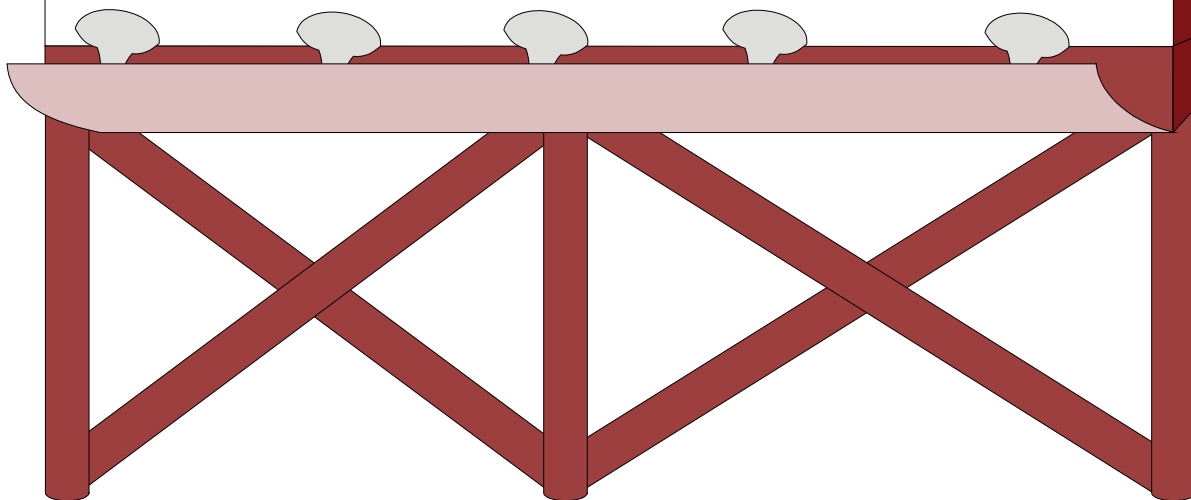
## What I Have Learned

- My character is a combination of values that I have gathered since birth.
- Some values are called moral values because they clearly define the right way to behave and are common to all people.
- When I behave in a way that is caring and considerate towards others and myself, I am displaying positive character traits.
- I can become a person of integrity when I consistently practice and demonstrate my moral character traits.
- Personality is what makes me a unique individual. It is a sum total of my likes and dislikes, attitudes and preferences.
- Personality is important in terms of how I interact with others and how they interact with me.
- Personality does not determine the “true colors” of someone’s character.
- I must be ready to determine, based on each and every situation, if moral character traits are being modeled or not.
- Ultimately, it is character, not personality, that should define who I am and who I associate with.



## Enrichment Activities

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



# Just For Fun

## Activity #1



Unscramble each word and write it on the line.

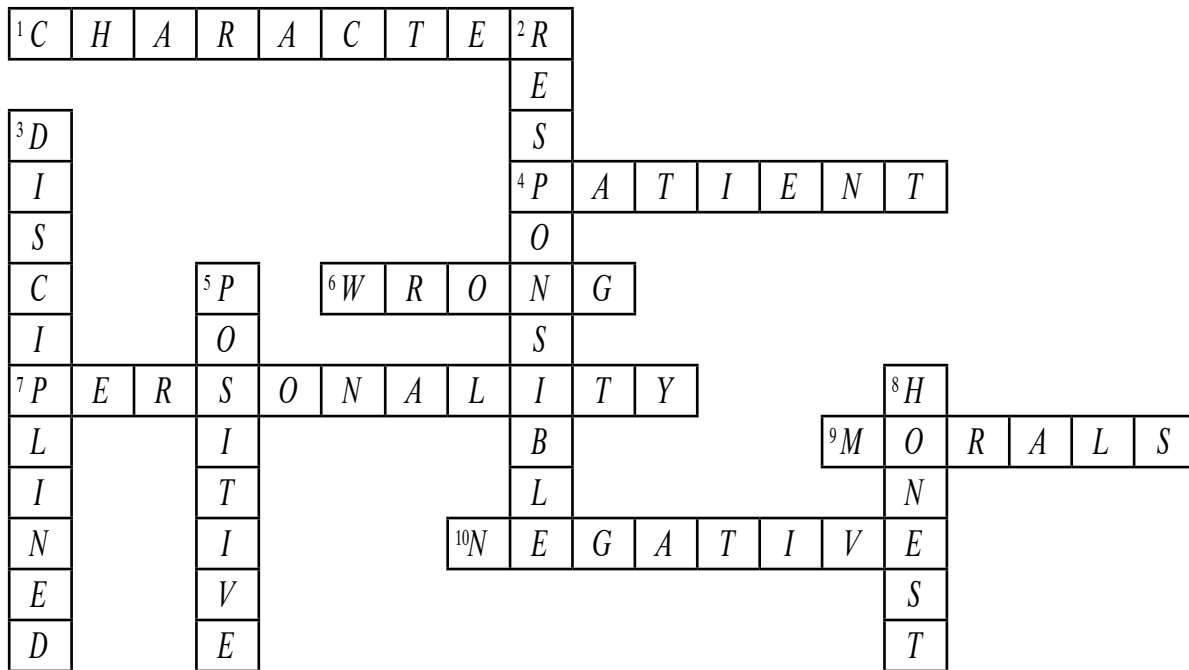
1. gnivigrof for giving
2. aadefsstt steadfast
3. tetapin patient
4. cleftupser respectful
5. osehtn honest
6. pocitismit optimistic
7. yhtrowtsurt trustworthy
8. goesaruocu courageous
9. lramo moral
10. tsorviuu virtuous
11. icremluf merciful
12. bailerel reliable
13. ebmlhu humble
14. orugenes generous
15. etanoissapmoc compassionate
16. cddenilpisi disciplined
17. lakfnuth thankful
18. elbisnopser responsible
19. suticnsioince conscientious
20. fcrelua careful

compassionate	generous	optimistic	responsible
courageous	honest	patient	steadfast
disciplined	humble	reliable	thankful
forgiving	merciful	respectful	trustworthy
moral	conscientious	careful	virtuous

# Just For Fun

## Activity #2

Use the clues to complete the puzzle.



### ACROSS

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

### DOWN

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





# Chapter Two

## The Effects Of Character Within The Family

### Note To The Teacher

**T**he role of family is paramount to our self-concept and how we interact with others. Therefore, this second chapter focuses on the family as one of the most important contributors to the development of character. Sadly, we live in a society where children are routinely abused in a variety of ways. What is even more astounding, is that only a fraction of those abuses are reported. Hence, it is uncertain how many cases of abuse actually exist. What is certain however, is that abuse in any form, whether reported or not, has adverse effects on the growth and development of children that can last a lifetime.

This second chapter takes a unique approach to character development, in that it not only teaches about the impact of family in the development of character, but it also informs students about the differences between a dysfunctional and a healthy family. This is an important distinction to teach our children. Because so many children have been traumatized for so long, they are unaware of what a normal, healthy family should consist of. Without this knowledge, they are more likely to repeat the same abuses to their children when they become parents. It is a known fact that many children who are abused become abusers themselves.

Other issues that will be covered in this chapter are:

- How both positive and negative character traits are developed through family interactions.
- What mutual respect is between children and parents and the importance of mutual respect within a family.
- Practical approaches to improving the overall character of a family.

It is the goal of *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* to give each child an opportunity to develop a positive moral character. Children need to be taught that despite the

## *Unit One*

challenges they face, the choice to be a person of integrity belongs to them. It is our obligation as educators and role models to give our children the skills, courage and determination to overcome any and all adversities for their sakes and for the sake of future generations.

# Lesson Plan

## The Effects Of Character Within The Family

### PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

Students will learn that a positive or negative character within the family directly affects their character. They will also be able to distinguish between a dysfunctional and a healthy family.

### MATERIALS

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

### PROCEDURE

1. Review the previous chapter by asking students to comment on the differences between character and personality. Ask students to share the dangers of forming friendships based solely upon compatible personalities.
2. Inform students that today they will explore the difference between a dysfunctional and a healthy family. They will also learn that both positive and negative experiences, within the family, are the foundation by which their character is formed and specific traits are developed. Guide class feedback by asking the following question: How does interaction between parents and other family members help to form character? (*Answers will vary but may include: parents are our first teachers, so positive interaction with them will help teach us the values and morals that help develop our relationship with others.*) Accept as many answers as time permits.
3. Have students turn to **pages 35-37** in their handbooks and read the “**Introduction**” and the section entitled, “**All In The Family,**” then complete the exercise that follows.

4. Tell students that because family plays such a vital role in the development of character, some problems within the family are extremely harmful to children. Ask students what problems they think can exist within a family that could hinder the development of a positive character. (*Answers will vary but may include: abuse of any kind, alcoholism, depression, mental problems, and so on.*) Accept as many answers as time permits.

Have students turn to **pages 38-41** in their handbooks and read the section entitled, “**When There Are Problems At Home.**” Read and discuss the narratives about Ricky’s and Shante’s experiences found on **page 43** and how these affected their character. Allow time for students to answer the questions that follow the stories.

5. Tell students that just as dysfunctional families foster negative character, healthy families help to build and support the growth and development of positive character. Through education in *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*, every member of a family can be helped. Have students turn to the section on **pages 44-46** in their handbooks entitled, “**What Is A Healthy Family?**” Have students read the various characteristics of a healthy family. Explain that the average family has some healthy qualities and some problems. Guide class feedback by asking:

- a. How many people are in your family? (*Answers will vary, take as many answers as time permits.*)
- b. Do you all get along all the time? (*Most likely, responses will be “no.”*)

6. Tell students that even though members within families share certain character and personality traits, each person possesses his own set of values and qualities that govern his life. Hence, they have different ways of thinking and doing things. All of these factors combined with living under one roof will produce some conflict. Stress that it is normal to have some problems or conflicts within a family, such as misunderstandings or arguments, but abuse of any kind should never be one of those problems. Have students read the section found on **pages 47-48** in their handbooks entitled, “**Somewhere In Between.**” Emphasize that with practice, every individual is capable of eliminating negative traits and developing the positive.

7. Inform students that they will now listen to a song about a young person’s family experiences. Have them read the lyrics found on **page 49**

in their handbooks, then discuss the song based on the following points.

- a. What values did this family have? (*One sister values the other sister by asking before touching, the brother valued riding his bike more than obeying his mother.*)
- b. What are some of the positive character traits in their family? (*Respect, care, compassion, responsibility*)
- c. What are some of the negative traits that need to be eliminated? (*Trespassing, disobedience*)
- d. Do you think that this person has a fairly normal family? Discuss why or why not? (*Answers will vary but may include: yes, they had conflicts, but they learned to work them out respectfully.*)

8. The exercise found on **pages 50-51** of the *Student's Handbook* is designed to allow students to gain a better understanding of their individual families. It will also expose other family members to the value of positive, moral character within the family, as well as areas that the students can improve on. Assign the exercise "**Family Matters, Family Assessment**" as a take home assignment. Instruct students to interview their family members based on the instructions on the sheet. Do a follow-up and allow students to discuss what they learned about themselves and their families.

9. Encourage students to read the section on **page 52** in their handbooks entitled, "**What I Have Learned.**" Conclude the lesson by reiterating that the goal of every parent should be to provide safety, food, shelter, clothing, guidance, love and appropriate affection to their children. Although every family will have its negatives and positives, a family should be a loving and supportive unit. In this way, each member of the family will have the opportunity to develop a positive character.

*Unit One*

*“Character Education as taught by The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program is a whole new way to socialize our children.”  
~ The Peaceful Solution*

## **Chapter Two**

# **The Effects Of Character Within The Family**

### **Introduction**

**I**n the last chapter you learned that through the process of genetics, some of your behavioral traits are inherited from your parents. You also learned that your values, what you consider as important, begin with what you have been taught. Your parents and your environment, as well as other siblings and family members, play a major role in what you value and the development of your character. It has been stated that all forms of parental interaction: verbal, physical or otherwise assist in reinforcing children’s values and behavior.

The role of parents and the family in shaping a positive or negative character cannot be overstated. In this chapter you will learn that character plays a key role in families. Negative or positive character has the ability to destroy a family or strengthen and build the family unit.



## All In The Family

**H**ave you ever heard someone say “You look just like your dad,” or “You act just like your sister.” Genetics account for similarities in both our physical and our character traits. For instance, does your mom cry at sad movies? Do you? If you cry at sad movies like your mom, this could be a result of inheriting a compassionate character. In other words, you have empathy for the characters in the movie. The word empathy simply means *the ability to feel what others feel and to identify with their experiences*.

Family members also share personality traits, but unlike character traits, which are sometimes inherited genetically, shared personality traits are often learned behaviors. A learned behavior is something you see and then practice. It is developed over time and within certain environments. For instance, do you like to go fishing? A love for fishing is an example of a personality trait that is learned. Maybe your father or grandfather liked to fish and taught you to value this same hobby. The excitement of catching your first fish and being praised for your efforts made it an experience you learned to value. You therefore have acquired that personality trait.

Of course, the same character and personality traits will not be common to all members of the family, because along with shared traits, each person is born with qualities that are unique. No two people think or act exactly alike. For instance, you may resemble your brother, but you are serious, whereas, he loves to laugh at everything. You may be neat and organized, whereas he throws his stuff everywhere. So, even within the same family, there are many differences and similarities. The combination of character, personality, environment, and experiences makes each person one of a kind. However, the most significant factors that shape you into who you are, are your parents and other family members.

It is from these two sources that you learn what to value, how to behave, and how to respond to different situations; and all of these things help to shape your character. If you are expected to complete chores, do homework, or help to take care of a younger sibling, you are being taught responsibility. If your parents insist that you eat only nutritious foods then you are being taught to value your health. If you have older siblings who are patient with you, then they are, by their example, helping you to develop the character trait of patience. These are only a fraction of the ways your parents and other family members can help you develop your character and personality.



**Write a short autobiography that includes some of the character and personality traits you share with your family. Are there any common traits that are peculiar to your father or mother’s side of the family? For instance, do doctors, policemen or teachers run in the family? Then write about some of the things that make you unique.**

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## When There Are Problems At Home

**J**ust as you are an individual with your own likes and dislikes, your own unique way of thinking, feeling and behaving, so too, are your parents. No two sets of parents will raise their children in exactly the same way. Parenting styles differ from one home to the next and are a combination of many different factors. An adult's experiences, values and character define what kind of parent he or she will be. Although most parents treat their children with love and respect, and provide them with safety, food and shelter, there are some parents, because of their upbringing and choices, who are verbally, emotionally, physically and even sexually abusive to their children. In these homes parents are often negligent. In other words, they do not provide their children with sufficient food or clothing, nor do they give their children attention or love. Homes where these types of abuses and negligence occur are called dysfunctional homes.



### Physical abuse results in:

- internal or external bruises
- fractures
- brain damage
- permanent injury or death

### Emotional and Verbal Abuse

Even though physical pain is not inflicted, emotional and verbal abuse are just as damaging. Years ago the National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse made the public aware of this form of abuse by displaying posters that read, "Words hit as hard as a fist." Words such as, "You're stupid," "You can't do anything right," and "I wish you were never born," cause rejection, fear, and resentment.

Every year over 18,000 children in the U.S. alone are physically abused and many more are emotionally and sexually abused.

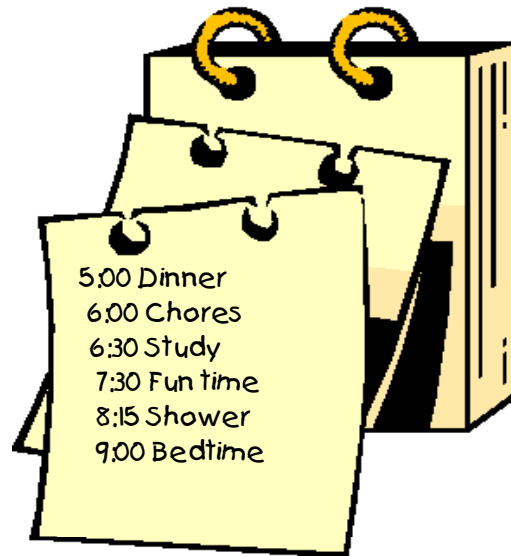


## Take A Bite Of This

**If you are asked to keep a secret that makes you feel uncomfortable, tell someone as fast as you can. Secrets that involve physical or sexual abuse were never meant to be kept.**

Sexual abuse that occurs in the home is extremely demoralizing and damaging to children. Sexual abuse includes, but is not limited to inappropriate touching, or having someone ask to see your private areas, or encouraging you to look at theirs. Sexual abuse can be committed by any member of the family. If anyone touches you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable tell them immediately to STOP! Then tell someone who will listen. If there is no one in your family who you can go to, then tell your teacher, guidance counselor, or some other trusted adult. Under no circumstance should you keep it a secret. No one has the right to touch you, or ask you to touch him or her in a sexual way. Sexual abuse violates the bond of trust and respect that must exist between family members, and it tears families apart. If you know someone who is in an abusive situation encourage him or her to confide in a trusted adult.

In a home where there is neglect, children are frequently left without food, attention or love. Often young children are left to care for themselves, to cook, clean and do their own laundry. In a home such as this, children suffer from malnutrition, which means that they are not getting enough healthy food to support their growing bodies and minds. These homes usually lack structure in that there is no set time for daily routines. Routines such as study time, bath time and bedtime are important in teaching character traits such as dependability and responsibility.



In abusive homes the rights of children to live in safety and to develop a positive character are taken away. When someone grows up in a home where there is physical and sexual abuse their self-concept and character development will be affected. Self-concept is the way you see yourself. It is very important to have a positive concept of who you are, because people with a negative self-concept tend to be sad, depressed, angry and resentful. These emotions can lead to negative character traits such as being hateful, aggressive and revengeful. These negative character traits often result in violent behaviors.

Read the following true account of one young woman's struggle with sexual abuse and the negative effects it had on her character.

### Case Study

In 1987 Cheryl Pierson served a prison sentence for arranging to have her father killed, after she learned that he was sexually abusing her younger sister. Cheryl had also been sexually abused for several years. Cheryl's mother knew of the abuse, however she did nothing to intervene and protect her two daughters, because she was afraid of losing her husband.

*Child Abuse*, William A. Check, p.36

It is clear to see that abuse has a negative effect on character. Cheryl became revengeful and arranged for her father to be killed.

Although most people who are abused do not go to this extreme, the development of their character is affected in many other ways. In addition to anger, violence and retaliation, abuse also causes feelings of loneliness, isolation and embarrassment. Because of this, children often keep their abuse a secret, afraid that if they tell, they would be blamed. If you are in a situation where you are being abused, then it is the adult who should be ashamed and embarrassed, not you. So be courageous and speak up. Keep in mind that it is not your fault. The role of adults is to keep you safe, to guide you and prepare you for adulthood by teaching you what is right from wrong. It is also the role of the adults in your life to love you, support you, and encourage you. No adult, not even a member of your family, has the right to mistreat you or abuse you in any way.

There is a difference between abuse and discipline. Some teens have tried to charge their parents with abuse for insisting chores and homework be done. Being grounded for breaking household rules is a form of discipline, not abuse.

Here are some other problems that affect the home and the devel-

opment of a positive character:

- **Alcoholism**
- **Substance abuse**
- **Domestic violence**
- **Divorce**

**Alcoholism and substance abuse** is *to be dependent upon alcohol or drugs*. These substances are highly addictive.

An **addiction** is *the overwhelming desire to do something*, in this case it is the overwhelming desire to abuse alcohol or take drugs such as marijuana, cocaine, or heroin. The danger in being addicted is that it clouds one's ability to think clearly and rationally. A person who is addicted will put the need for more drugs or alcohol above everything else in their life. The presence of alcoholism and substance abuse within a family often leads to neglect and child abuse in all its various forms, as well as domestic violence.

**Domestic violence** is *the use of physical force to injure or abuse another within a family*. In these homes there is so much fear and violence, it is very difficult to grow and develop in a positive way.

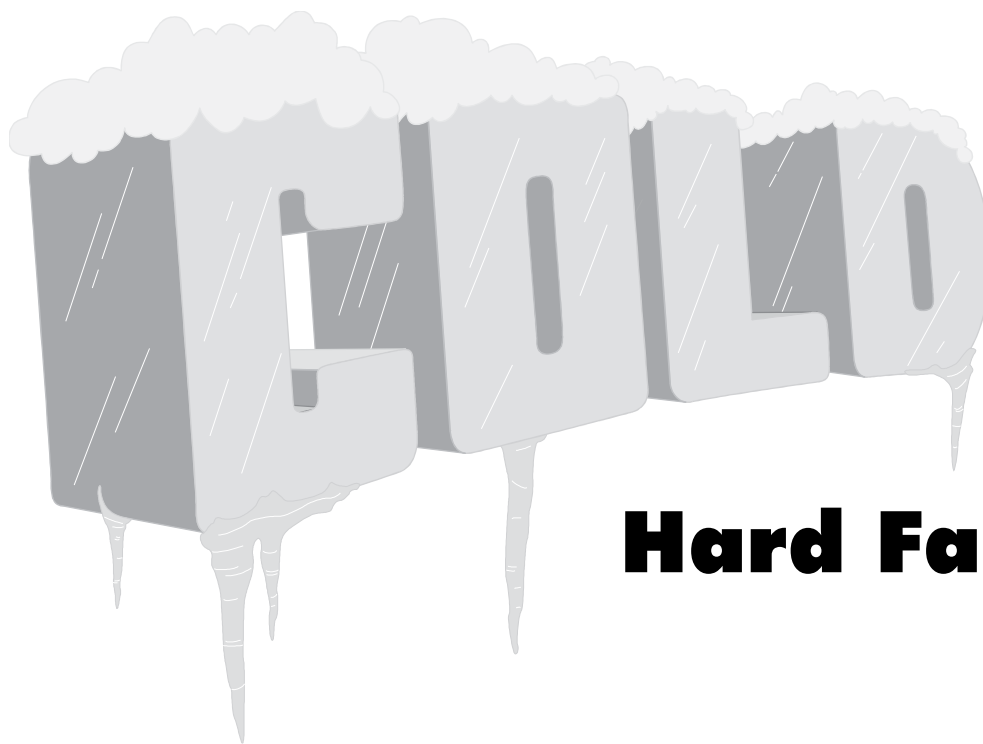
In addition to these factors, there is also divorce to consider, and its effects on the family. Children who watch their parents go through a divorce suffer tremendous feelings of guilt and frustration. They frequently blame themselves for their parents' decisions and feel powerless to change their parents' choices.

### **Read the following statistics of the effects divorce has on children.**

- 63% of children from divorced homes suffer from anxiety, sadness, moodiness, phobias and depression.
- 56% of the children's grades dropped in school or have grades below their ability.
- 43% display aggression towards parents.

If you have had to deal with separation or divorce in your family, remember it is your parents' decision. Although it affects you and your siblings, there is very little you can do about it. Being sad or angry is a normal emotion to feel at that time, so talk about the way you feel to a trusted adult or close friend. Even though that is a time of emotional upheaval, continue to focus on building your positive character. Allowing yourself to become disrespectful, angry and hostile will not bring your parents back together. Be determined to avoid this trap yourself when you become an adult.

# The



# Hard Facts

Long term effects of child abuse include fear, anxiety, depression, anger, hostility, inappropriate sexual behavior, a poor concept of themselves and difficulty forming relationships.

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Adults who viewed domestic violence in the home as children have greater difficulty staying employed and are more likely to have mental problems.

.....

Every year over 1,400 children die due to abuse—that’s over 4 children a day.

The United States Advisory Board reported that due to abuse, there are over 18,000 children permanently disabled every year. Tens of thousands of victims deal with psychological trauma. As adults, many turn to domestic violence or become abusers themselves.

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Girls, as well as boys, are sexually molested.

.....

Children whose parents abuse drugs or alcohol have a greater opportunity of being emotionally, physically and sexually abused.

*Statistics: Child Abuse*  
[www.yesican.org](http://www.yesican.org)

**The following are real stories about children who were abused.  
Their names have been changed to protect their privacy.**

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### **Ricky**

For the first 11 years of Ricky's life he didn't know what it felt like to be loved. As a baby, he was sent to one baby sitter after the next. As he got older, his mother would leave him for long periods of time by himself, often without food. There were nights when Ricky's mother stayed all night at a local bar. When she was home, she was high on cocaine. By the time Ricky was nine, he started hanging out with a gang of boys and eventually stopped coming home. One night he and another gang member mugged an old woman. While trying to get her bag, Ricky pushed her, and she fell and broke her hip. Ricky was arrested and sent to a juvenile detention center.

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### **Shante**

Shante's parents divorced two years ago. Since then, Shante's mother remarried a man who turned out to be an abusive alcoholic. When he came home from work already drunk, he would beat her mother and curse Shante and her sister. One night as he physically abused her mother, Shante tried to stop him. He knocked Shante against a wall. Not too long after that, he sexually molested her. Since that incident, Shante barely talks to anyone, not even at school. Her grades have fallen, and she has been sent to the principal's office several times for detention. She is easily angered and has become aggressive with her peers and teachers.

1. How did Ricky's and Shante's experiences help to develop a negative character?

*Influences of negativity began to control their behavior.*

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2. What were some of the negative character traits they developed?

*They became aggressive, disrespectful, violent, hateful, dishonest, unforgiving.*

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3. Without the positive character trait of forgiveness, how do you think Ricky's and Shante's experiences will affect the rest of their lives?

*They will continue to be bitter people. They may continue making bad choices, ending up in worse trouble. They may become like the very people who caused harm to them.*

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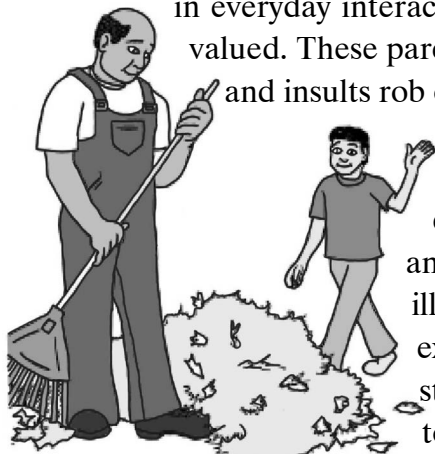
## What Is A Healthy Family?

There are many dysfunctional families where there is child abuse, alcoholism and substance abuse, but there are equally as many families that are loving and all members are respectful to each other. However, in most families today, there are many conflicts. The average family consists of anywhere between two to five people, and although they all share many character and physical traits, conflicts exist due to each person's individual qualities. Siblings argue, and parents often disagree openly on many subjects. The difference between a healthy family that has been trained or have trained themselves in moral character and a dysfunctional one is that in a healthy family all family members are given the love, respect and support that is needed to develop moral character traits.



In families educated in positive moral character, appropriate affection is shown to all members. In other words, it is appropriate for members of a family to display true love and concern, congratulations, appreciation and sometimes a loving hug. This is not to be confused with the inappropriate touch of sexual molestation. An appropriate touch does not cause you to feel uncomfortable. Children from families educated in positive morals know that family members can be trusted not to abuse or molest them in any way.

In these families, children communicate their needs to parents in positive ways. Children also respond to their parents with respect. Members of the family verbally express their care and concern for each other by saying, "I love you," or "I appreciate you." Other verbal courtesies such as, "please," "thank you," and "I apologize," are frequently used in everyday interactions. In these families, the use of kind words is valued. These parents teach, by example, that name calling, teasing and insults rob others of their self-worth.

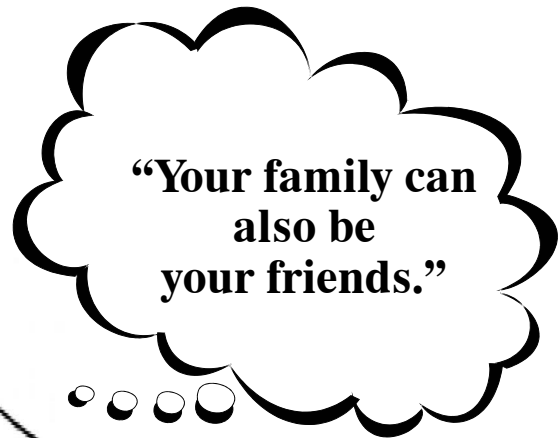
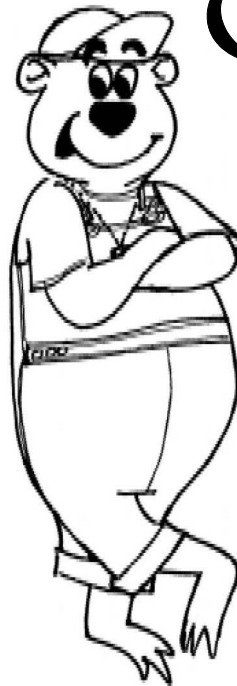


In these families, physical and mental health are also valued. Therefore, the abuse of alcohol or drugs is discouraged. There are open discussions and positive communication about the dangers of illegal drugs and the abuse of alcohol. Some families explore alternatives to the use of legal drugs. They study and use herbs and other natural substitutes to relieve the symptoms of common ailments.

In these families, there is consistency in daily routines. In other words, there is a time for everything, and children know what to expect from day to day. You can feel safe in knowing that your parents will always make time to go grocery shopping and that you will always have food to eat. In a home where there is a set routine, there is time for homework, baths, bedtime and even fun time. Everyone is assigned chores and contributes to how the family functions. This fosters character traits such as responsibility and discipline. In addition to this, there is time set aside for quality family interaction. Often everyone in the family is busy with their own schedules. Spending time together is important, because it helps you to appreciate your similarities and differences. These families find special things to do together that are pleasant and morally enlightening to one another. The members respect each other and their possessions by always remembering to ask permission before touching, taking or borrowing an item. They often take turns reading from a special book. Value the quality time you spend with your family and be thankful for each and every family member.

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**Bear  
This In  
Mind!**



Another important aspect of a family trained with moral character is to resolve all conflicts by finding the peaceful solution that shows respect for other family members. No family member should ever purposely cause his or her spouse, child or sibling injury or abuse. Siblings should never fight, shove or push each other, nor should the adults physically injure each other or their children. Violence against others violates their right to be safe and free from harm.

Does this mean that in a family no one ever becomes angry? No, of course people become angry, irritable, frustrated and annoyed, as they try to overcome these traits. The important thing is that anger and frustration are expressed without name-calling, cursing, pushing, shoving or kicking, because family members are respectful to each other. They are also patient by trying to help each other solve their problems or mistakes. They tell each other why they are angry or sad and use positive communication to express their feelings and forgiveness.

### The Right Way

### The Wrong Way



Negative communication and showing disrespect for others do not solve anything. In fact, they create more problems. On the other hand, treating others with respect and using positive communication resolve conflicts and create peaceful solutions—a goal everyone should strive for.

# Somewhere In Between

**A**re families either totally dysfunctional or totally healthy? Most families are somewhere in between. Family life may not be as ideal as all the points you read about in the previous section, but at the same time, abuses that are physical, emotional and sexual should never occur within a family. However, even when abuses are not occurring there may still be other problems. For instance, although there may be no physical or sexual abuse, family members may not always handle anger or frustration in appropriate ways. Instead of using positive communication and respectfully expressing their views, they may choose instead to argue, yell and put each other down. There may be one member of the family who has a problem with drugs and alcohol and disrupts what would otherwise be a healthy family. Sometimes certain family members neglect to do chores or fulfill other duties. This puts extra stress on others and also creates conflicts.

Families, like individuals, have both negative and positive traits. However, family relationships can be improved when each member begins to develop moral character traits while, at the same time, eliminating the negative traits. This can be accomplished if everyone begins to value how a moral character can improve the quality of his or her family. But even if you are the only one in your family who sees the value of a moral character, you can, by your example, encourage others to value developing an upright, moral character, as well.

You can begin improving your family life by using moral character traits when interacting with your parents, siblings and other family members. You can start by being respectful in your daily conversations and by being responsible and doing your share of chores. You must also remember to be humble, especially if you have done something wrong and your parents are correcting you, or giving you advice on ways you could have better handled the situation. The character traits of respect and humility, when used on a consistent basis, will reduce many conflicts and arguments between family members and especially between you and your parents.

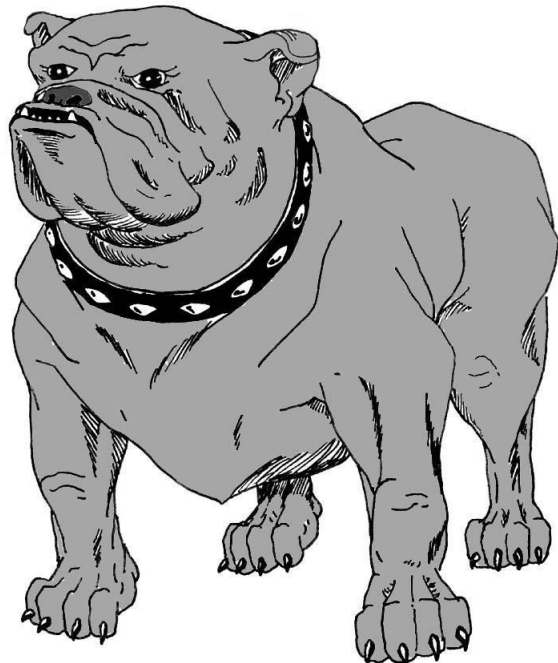
The next time your brother or sister does something that annoys you, use patience and positive communication to express your feelings in an appropriate way. This means no name calling or purposely trying to hurt his or her feelings. Then, be willing to forgive. Keep reminding

him or her that you would prefer hearing a request for permission before touching your things. Always be the one to set the right example to avoid conflicts. Model these things to help others learn from you, too. Remember, it could be you who gets on your sibling's nerves the next time. How would you want to be treated? There are many ways a positive character can be used to strengthen a family. So consciously make an effort to practice using your positive character traits every day and, by your example encourage others to do the same.



## Chew On This...

“Learn to accept correction from your parents. They’re not correcting you to hurt you but for your own benefit.”



# Song: My Family And Me

1. I argued with my sister the other day,  
She took my new blouse away... oh, oh  
She didn't even ask me. She should have done that.  
I was mad at her even though she brought it back.

**Chorus:** My family and me, my family and me,  
We love each other, it's clear to see.  
Although they've got their views, and I've got mine too,  
We're friends to the end.

2. My mom told my brother to take out the trash.  
He said he couldn't do it because he got whiplash... oh, oh  
From riding his bike, when his homework should be done.  
Mom grounded him, now he won't have any fun.

**Chorus:**

3. "Stop!" Mom said, "What's going on here?  
When your dad comes home, these problems he's going to hear." ...oh, oh  
*Oh no*, thought my sister, brother and I,  
*Now we'll have a family meeting so we can see eye to eye.*

**Chorus:**

4. Dad said, "Respect, care and compassion too,  
This is what your mother and I have been teaching you... oh, oh  
Watch out for those values that may get in the way.  
The lessons that we've taught you, don't throw them away."

**Chorus:**

5. We both apologized and learned from what we went through.  
We knew we should forgive each other and start anew... oh, oh  
My brother also learned his own lesson that day.  
He's been humble and he's learned responsibility.

**Chorus:**



*Click to Play*



# Family Matters

## Family Assessment

Interview three members of your family based on the following questions. Write the name of the family member(s) you are interviewing in the space provided.

Family Member's Name

Family Member's Name

Family Member's Name

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1. What do you like most about being in your family? List what each person enjoys about being in the family. For example, family meals or fun outings.

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2. In what ways do you think your family can be improved?

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3. What negative character traits will have to be eliminated in order to make the above improvements?

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4. What positive character traits will have to be developed or accentuated in order to make these improvements?


5. What positive character changes can you make that could be an example to others in your family?


6. What did you discover about your family and about yourself from this assessment?

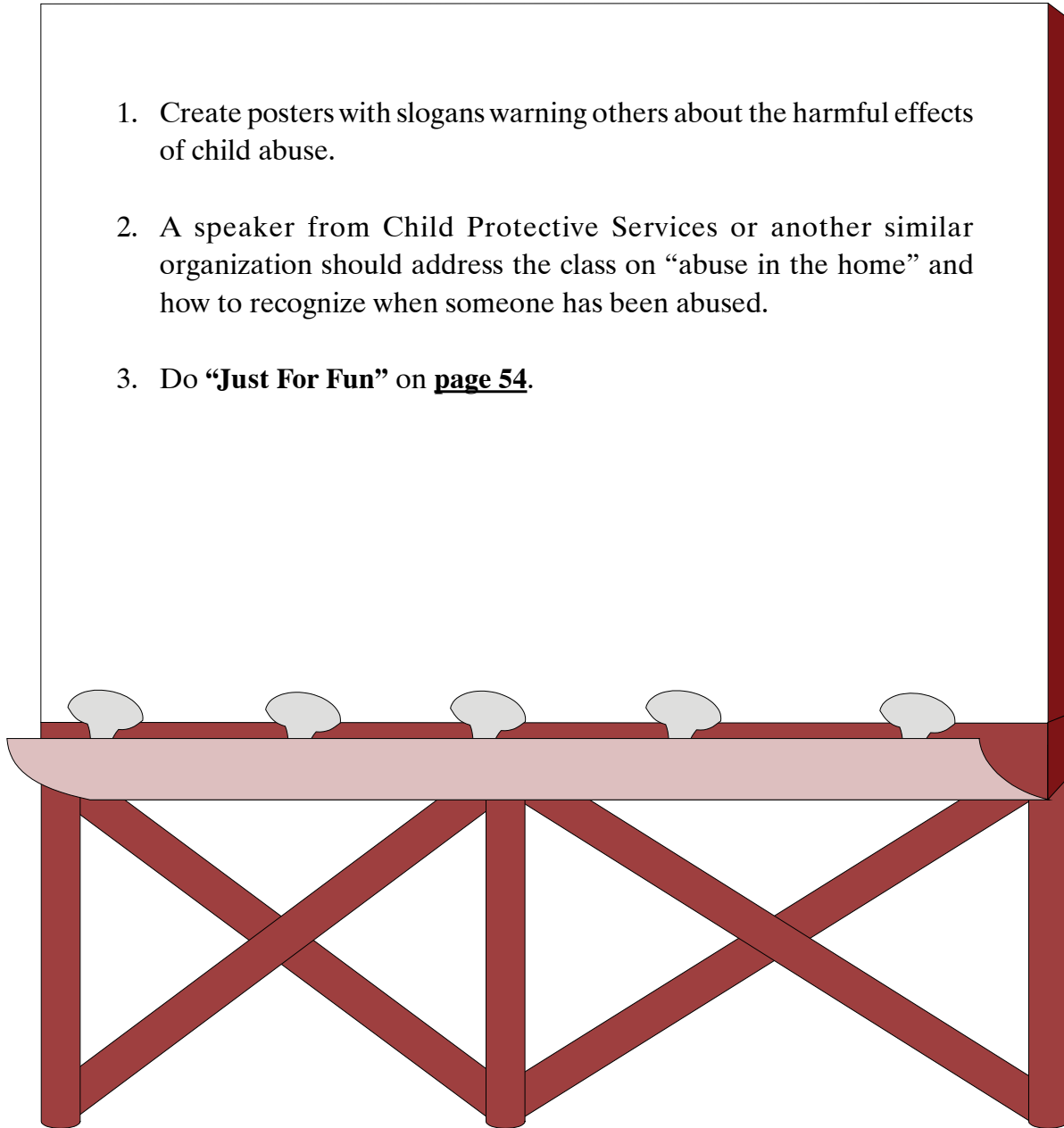

## What I Have Learned

- ☑ My parents and other family members play an important part in the development of my character and personality.
- ☑ All of my interactions and experiences affect the way I grow and what I value.
- ☑ Families that suffer from emotional, physical and sexual abuse, as well as, alcohol and substance abuse, also experience the most damaging effects on the development of positive character, but even that can be changed with effort, example and teaching of *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*, on my part.
- ☑ In homes such as these there is a great deal of fear, violence, hostility and resentment, but I see that I can help myself and others as well. This I am capable of doing.
- ☑ These emotions lead to negative character traits such as hatred, aggression and revenge, but I can find ways to assist in all problems as I grow and develop my own moral character traits.
- ☑ In healthy, moral families, violence and abuse are discouraged, because positive values and positive character traits based on respect and compassion are at the core of all interactions between family members. I will also do my part to assure complete peace within my family.
- ☑ Although the average family may not have all the qualities of a healthy moral family, family members can nonetheless learn to develop the values and character that will make their family healthier.
- ☑ I can be an example to other family members when I display a positive character and when I teach by example what I have learned from *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*.

**“The strength of a family lies in positive character.”**

## Enrichment Activities

1. Create posters with slogans warning others about the harmful effects of child abuse.
2. A speaker from Child Protective Services or another similar organization should address the class on “abuse in the home” and how to recognize when someone has been abused.
3. Do “**Just For Fun**” on page 54.



# Just For Fun

Find the hidden words.



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

alcohol	friends	songs	videogames
drugs	internet	teachers	
family	school	television	

# Chapter Three

## The Making Of A V.I.P.

### Note To The Teacher

**T**he concept of what makes people important varies from one individual to the next. Some say power, fame, wealth or a combination of all three is what makes a person important. It is the belief of *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* that the true measure of importance of any individual begins and ends with moral character.

In this chapter, a twofold interpretation of the acronym V.I.P. will be presented. Students will learn that when they access their **V**alues, as well as **I**mitate and **P**ractise proper behavior, they can become **V**ery **I**important **P**eople.

It is vital that we teach our children how to monitor their own environment. As they mature and gain independence, they must learn how to filter out those influences that pose barriers to attaining a positive, moral character such as violence on television, in movies and songs, as well as negative peer pressure.

We live in a culture where our children's role models are sports players, singers and movie stars. This would not be an issue if these 'role models' lived exemplary lives, but where positive character is lacking, it poses a threat to the moral development of our children. Hence, we must also teach our children how to choose positive role models and what behaviors are worth imitating. Let us work together to ensure that our children appreciate that the true measure of self-worth and importance is attained through positive character.

*Unit One*

# Lesson Plan

## The Making Of A V.I.P.

### PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

Students will learn how to develop their own system of values amidst negative influences in order to obtain a positive character.

### MATERIALS

- Students' handbook

### PROCEDURE

1. Review the previous chapter, “**The Effects Of Character Within The Family,**” by asking students the following questions:
  - a. How are character and personality developed in a family where there is abuse? (*Answers should include: in a negative way.*)
  - b. What are some elements of a healthy family? (*All family members are given the love, respect and support needed to develop positive character traits. Appropriate affection is shown. Needs are properly communicated.*)
  - c. How can family members improve the overall character of their family? (*Set time aside to spend together. Being an example by practicing true morals as learned.*)
2. Tell students that they have explored how problems within a family can affect the development of a positive character. In this chapter they will explore other factors that can affect character. They will also learn to assess their values and develop a positive character in the midst of negative influences. Have students turn to **page 55** in their handbooks and read the section entitled, “**Introduction.**”
3. Remind students that in Chapter One, “**More Than Meets The Eye,**” they explored what is meant by values. Explain that as individuals, they will begin to develop their own values in addition to what they have been taught. Guide class discussion by asking the following question: What are some things you value that differ from your parents? (*Answers will vary but may include: “My parents*

*value a college education, but I want to go to trade school,” “My parents think it’s important for me to attend summer camp, but I value getting a summer job.”)* Emphasize that even though they have begun to form their own values, developing a positive, moral character means respecting the values of others even when those values do not coincide with theirs.

4. Have students turn to **pages 56-57** in their handbooks and complete the section entitled, **“What’s Important To You?”** Tell students that it is normal to value family, friends and even having fun. However, their values should not conflict with obtaining a positive character. Have students read the article **“Only 10 and 12 and Charged With Robbing a Bank”** on **page 59** in their handbooks.

5. Tell students that influences can affect the things we value. Have students read the section entitled, **“Influences Are All Around Us”** found on **page 60** in their handbooks, then turn to **page 61** and do the exercise, **“Test Your Knowledge About Influences.”** Ask students how many of them were surprised at the variety of influences that affect us daily. Discuss which of these influences have the potential to be positive or negative. Explain to students that all influences have the ability to change our perception of what we believe, what we value and even our actions. Tell students that they will focus on the four influences that are especially pertinent to their age group. Ask students for their input as to what these influences are. Allow time for students to guess, then specify: Movies/Television, Songs, Video Games and Peers.

6. Explain to students that violence is one influence that has a negative effect on their values and their ability to achieve a positive character. Have students read and discuss the sections found on **pages 64-65** in their handbooks entitled, **“Violence Is No Fun And Games”** and **“Lights! Camera! Action!”**, then take the quiz on **page 66**. Discuss how seeing repeated acts of violence can affect their ability to choose nonviolent means to solve their problems. Ask students, what effect does violence have on our society and on them as individuals. *(Answers will vary but may include: it influences us to take on the characteristics that we are continually seeing, thereby accepting crime, pain and suffering as normal behavior.)*

7. Discuss the importance of music within our culture. Tell students that music has been used as a way to express emotions and opinions for thousands of years. Music has the ability to influence the way we feel which affects the way we behave. Have students read the sections, **“Do Re Me!”** and **“Music and Violence,”** found on **pages 67-68** in their

handbooks. Then divide the class into groups of 3-4 students. Have students discuss some of the popular songs and lyrics. Instruct students to use the activity sheet at the bottom of **page 67** to answer the questions as indicated.

8. Tell students that another important source of influence comes from peers and others they interact with. These influences can be both positive and negative. Have students read the sections entitled, “**Peer Power**” and “**Mirror, Mirror**” found on **pages 70-71** in their handbooks. Guide class feedback by asking the following questions:

- a. Who do you consider a role model and what positive character traits do they consistently demonstrate? (*I consider my mother a role model. She teaches me to be responsible.*)
- b. What do you admire most about them? (*I admire my mother’s sense of humor.*)
- c. How long have they influenced your values? (*All my life.*)
- d. How do they encourage you to demonstrate a positive character? (*Always reminding me to make right decisions and become the best that I can be.*)

9. Tell students that they can achieve a positive character by remembering to be a V.I.P. Have students read the section found on **pages 73-74** in their handbooks entitled, “**Steps To A Moral Character.**” Expound upon each of the steps by explaining that step one is to be aware of what their **Values** are, and how they are influenced to achieve them. Step two of obtaining a positive character requires carefully observing the people and characteristics that we decide to choose for our own. In other words, we **Imitate**. Do they consistently demonstrate positive character traits? The final step is to **Practice** making the right choices to behave in a manner that demonstrates positive character, that does not bring harm to others, but in fact, shows consideration for others.

10. Encourage students to read the section entitled, “**What I Have Learned**” on **page 75** in their handbooks. Encourage students to strive to obtain a positive, moral character by being aware of their values and influences, by choosing positive behaviors and emulating the positive characteristics of a role model. Conclude the lesson by encouraging students that to be a very important person with a positive, moral character, they must remember their V.I.P.’s.



*“Educate, educate, educate on true moral character and save the world.”  
~ The Peaceful Solution*

# Chapter Three

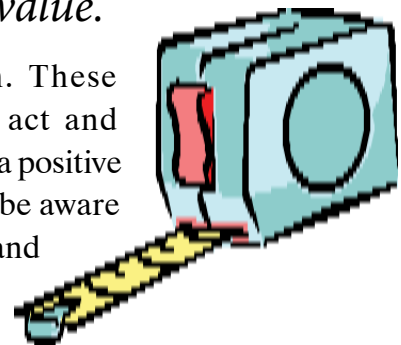
## The Making Of A V.I.P.

### Introduction

Not everyone has the benefits of loving and caring parents. Nor does everyone even have parents. There are many orphans throughout the world. Due to sickness, disease, wars and other acts of violence, many have lost parents and family members. If you are one of those, do not let that stop you if you desire to follow *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* and develop a perfectly moral character. You will then stand out among men and women and succeed where others fail. You have already begun to explore the important role that true moral values play in your life. They are the basis by which your character is formed. In addition to the values that have been instilled within you by your parents, grandparents, babysitters, and teachers, you have also developed some of your own values that you believe to be important. This is called growing up. Maturing and forming your own opinions and values are how you become a unique individual. As you well know, no two people are alike. Without the process of growing up and developing some values independent of what you have already been taught, you would be identical to your parents just as your parents would be identical to their parents.

*Measure yourself by the things you value.*

We live in a world of constant interaction. These interactions influence the way we think, feel, act and ultimately what we value. Influences can have either a positive or negative effect on our character. It's up to you to be aware of how these influences will affect what you value and your choice to obtain a positive character.



## What's Important To You?

Did you ever stop to consider what is important to you? Complete the following questionnaire to find out. (Note: you may circle more than one answer.)

1. On a Saturday night I would rather:
  - a. stay home and read.
  - b. spend time with my friends.
  - c. stay home and spend time with my family.
  - d. other \_\_\_\_\_



2. In order not to feel left out, I would:
  - a. agree with whatever my friends want to do.
  - b. tag along and pretend I was interested in what my friends were doing even if it was wrong.
  - c. spend time only with those who shared positive character traits.
3. When I see something that belongs to someone else that I want, I:
  - a. take it without asking permission first.
  - b. look around to make sure no one is watching, and then I take it.
  - c. ask permission to see it and accept whatever answer I am given.
4. I solve problems by:
  - a. arguing and fussing.
  - b. being patient and reasoning.
  - c. cursing and pushing.
5. When I get money, I:
  - a. buy video games.
  - b. buy clothes.
  - c. save it.
  - d. other \_\_\_\_\_

6. When something new comes out that all my friends have, like clothes or shoes, I:
  - a. immediately ask my parents if they can get it for me.
  - b. do odd jobs and save money until I can get it for myself.
  - c. look at what I already have and decide if I really need something new.



7. I watch R-rated movies which contain aggression and violence because:

- a. all my friends do.
- b. that's what I like.
- c. I can handle it .
- d. I do not watch R-rated movies.

8. If my parents ask me *not* to do something:

- a. I won't do it.
- b. I'll do it if I think its not dangerous and I can get away with it.
- c. I'll do it if my friend's parents are letting them.

9. Concerning drugs, I will:

- a. never try any illegal drug.
- b. try drugs if I don't think they're dangerous.
- c. try drugs if my friends will or only if I'm at a pa



10. If I want a great grade on the test, I will

- a. study hard.
- b. look at my friend's paper during the test.
- c. write cheat-notes on my hand.

11. As a friend, I think it is better to be

- a. honest.
- b. loyal.
- c. generous.

12. Which would you rather be?

- a. a respectable person.
- b. a gang leader.
- c. a con-artist.

13. If you had only one slice of pizza left and your friend was hungry, you would

- a. hide it, after all it is your last piece.
- b. give it to your friend.
- c. trade it for something he/she has.
- d. other \_\_\_\_\_



Now that you have completed the questionnaire you should have a clearer understanding of some of the things you value or think of as important in your life. At your age, it is perfectly normal and healthy to value friends, family, fun stuff, and being accepted by others. However, if your answers indicate that you would disobey authority, experiment with drugs or cheat, then you need to stop and reevaluate the things that are important to you. Values, like character, can be positive or negative. Either way, they help to give your life direction and play a key role in the choices you make.

Carefully consider what you value and decide if your values are positive or negative, by asking yourself these questions.

1. Can this cause harm to others or myself?
2. Does it go against what I know is right and healthy?
3. Can this have a negative impact on my future?
4. Will this help me to build a positive character?

Negative values will keep you from developing a moral character. So be careful about what you value. Another important aspect about values is how you achieve the things that matter to you. How you achieve your values must never be in conflict with developing a positive character. For example, it's okay to value friends, but do you value your friends so much that you would do *anything*, even something dangerous, to maintain your friendships? Do you value material possessions so much that you would do anything to get more, even if it's something dishonest? Do you value your opinion and being right to the point where you would physically hurt someone to *prove* you're right?



## Only 10 and 12 and Charged With Robbing A Bank

Two young girls are accused of trying to rob a bank Friday around 1:45 p.m. Police said the suspects, ages 10 and 12, walked into a bank and told the teller they were armed.

It was reported that they displayed a note that said, “We don’t want to hurt anyone. Just put \$2,000 in the bag, and we’ll be on our way. I have a gun in my pocket, but like I said, I don’t want to hurt anyone...”

The girls planned to rob the bank and run behind a nearby Foodland supermarket, where they would change clothes to avoid being recognized by witnesses.

Then they were going to take the stolen money to a nearby department store, where they had set aside clothes and supplies that they wanted to buy for the upcoming school year.

It has also been reported that the girls, who are not being publicly identified because of their ages, came up with the plan after watching television shows and movies with similar plots...

The two girls were charged with bank robbery and were being held at Shuman Juvenile Detention Center in Pittsburgh.

*Pre-teen Girls Charged In Attempted Bank Heist, 7/24/01,*  
[www.thepittsburghchannel.com](http://www.thepittsburghchannel.com)



## Influences Are All Around Us

**Y**our values play such a key role in developing your character that you must be aware of how influences affect the things that are important to you. An **influence** is *something or someone that has the ability to affect your attitude, way of thinking, feeling and behaving.*

Have you ever been in a hailstorm and felt like you were getting hit from every direction? Or how about a batting cage, and the ball machine went haywire? Whether you realize it or not, you are constantly being bombarded with influences. Everything you hear, experience, and see, as well as, every interaction and conversation that you are a part of, have the potential to change the way you think and feel about the things you value.

How you are influenced can affect what you value or motivate you to create new values. For instance, one day a special speaker came to your school. During assembly she talked about the need for more young people who would like to study hard and become involved in a special program where they could travel to another country to study for a semester. You were so interested in this, that you learned to value the concept of getting great grades and of traveling to a foreign country.

Influences can come in all different sizes. They can be positive or negative, subtle or bold. But the one thing they all have in common is: they all have the ability to affect what you value and affect your character in either a positive or negative way.



“HOW MUCH DOES A BAG OF INFLUENCES COST?”

# Test Your Knowledge About Influences

Which of the following are influences? Circle the correct answers.

Jobs	Teachers	Peers	TV
Community	Movies	Magazines	Family
Advertisements	Environment	The Internet	Billboards
Designers	Styles	Odors	Colors
Books	Drugs	Video Games	Politicians
Songs	Animals	Media	Friends
Commercials	Businesses	Musicians/Singers	
Alcohol	Sports	Religious Leaders	
School	Food	Movie Actors/Actresses	

## More Than You Realize

How did you do? If you circled all of the words, you are absolutely correct. All of these are influences, and they can affect you by changing the way you think, feel and act. We are more susceptible to influences than we realize, and just like in a hailstorm, they come at us from all directions. Like our character, influences can be both positive and negative. Knowing what you value will help you to decide what to allow yourself to be influenced by and what to ignore.

## Some Influences Are Subtle ...

So subtle in fact, that you could go through your whole life and not realize that they were influencing you. The foods you eat, for example, have an incredible amount of influence over the way you think, feel and behave. Improper foods that were never meant to be eaten can affect the way you think in a negative way. Excessive use of only foods with little nutritional value will keep you from growing and developing mentally to the best of your ability.



Did you know that colors also influence you? Some colors are noted for being calming and soothing. For example, whites and pastels are used in hospitals to calm the sick. Nurses and doctors also wear whites and pastels, for the same reason. Bright colors are said to influence learning. Hence, day care centers and other institutions for early learning use bright primary colors, such as yellows, blues, and greens. Advertisers are especially aware of how colors influence us. The color red stimulates our appetite for food and merchandise.

Many restaurants use red carpets and red tablecloths. During the Christmas season, red is the primary color used in decorating department stores. It encourages shoppers to spend, spend, spend!



## Some Influences We Know

If any of you are pet lovers, you are probably already aware of how your pet influences you. Pets have been known to have a calming effect on people and their funny antics can make us laugh even when we are feeling down. Science has also realized what pet owners have known all along, that a pet can be your best friend. Animals are now used to help lift people out of their feelings of depression. They are used in nursing homes and at special times in children's hospitals. There is also a program called *Swimming With The Dolphins* that has had a remarkable effect on autistic and mentally disabled children.



## Violence Is No Fun and Games

**V**iolence on television, in the movies and in video games can affect your character in many ways. Many studies prove that as a result of seeing violent shows where aggression is high, teenagers just like you, become desensitized to the horror of violence, aggression and the suffering of others. In other words, by seeing violent acts repeated over and over again, it may not affect you even in real life to see someone hurt or suffering. This is called desensitization.

Here is something else to think about. By viewing violent and aggressive shows, there is a tendency to imitate the behaviors of certain characters. Have you ever seen little children running around pretending to be wrestlers or practicing martial arts right after they watch a movie or show on TV? Have you ever done this yourself?

Video games are also another source of violence that has been known to have a negative influence on values and character. Video games are a multi-billion dollar a year industry. They are now one of the most popular forms of entertainment in many households and attract mainly boys and men of all ages. The most popular games involve shooting or martial arts that end with one or more of the players dying a bloody, painful death. Reports also show that playing video games can actually slow brain development. How do you think violent acts that you see on television, the movies and video games affect *your* character?

**Don't underestimate the influence violence can have on your character.**



NEGATIVE INFLUENCES BECOME PART OF YOUR SUBCONSCIOUS MIND, AND EVEN THOUGH YOU ARE NOT AWARE OF THEM, THEY CAN CAUSE YOU TO THINK AND ACT IN A SPECIFIC WAY.

# LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!

Action, suspense and violence are the stuff great movies are made of, right? Millions of moviegoers seem to agree. In fact, the more action and violence the movie has, the more it is hyped up and promoted as a great flick. Did you ever see a movie and when it was all over the only thing you could recall was the fight scene? One of the most recent studies concluded that in an average two and a half hour action movie, there are over 70 acts of violence. Violence that includes assault, assault with a deadly weapon, armed robbery, rape, murder and homicides are all on the big screen for your “entertainment.”

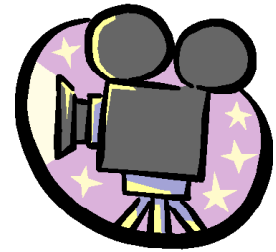
The heroes and heroines always have the “right moves” and know how to “nail” the bad guys. There are also movies where the *bad guy* is the hero and yet others where comedy is added to acts of aggression. Overall, the movie industry makes violence look glamorous. It offers violence as a way to solve problems. Sometimes it makes it seem as though violence is the *only* way to solve a problem.



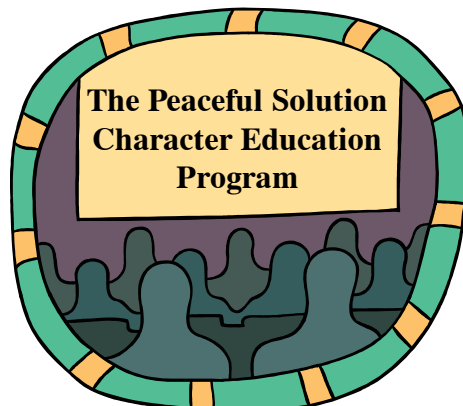
# Activity For Lights! Camera! Action!

Take this quiz to find out if you are influenced by the movies you watch.

1. I find movies containing violence in the form of kicking, punching, or the use of weapons exciting and fun to watch.
  - a. Always
  - b. Sometimes
  - c. Never
  
2. If the “bad guy” gets hurt, I feel like he deserves it.
  - a. Always
  - b. Sometimes
  - c. Never
  
3. I think it’s fun to imitate some of the karate or kick moves I see in the movies.
  - a. Always
  - b. Sometimes
  - c. Never
  
4. I think that if I could fight as well as the movie stars, I could solve a lot of my problems.
  - a. Always
  - b. Sometimes
  - c. Never



If you checked *Always* and *Sometimes* to any of the answers, this shows that you are influenced by the movies you watch. The ideal answer for all the statements is, *Never*.





# Do, Re, Me!

**L**et's talk about music. Can music influence your character? The answer is YES! The music industry is a huge money-making business. Millions of dollars are spent every year on CD's and cassettes by teens like you. From rhythm and blues to alternative, heavy metal, and rock, music is an important part of life and has been influencing people for thousands of years. **Music has the ability to affect our emotions, and emotions affect the way we act.**

Some music is used to help young children learn. Words put to a melody or rhythm are easier to remember. This is why the ABC's are sung, as well as many other children's songs. Sexually explicit and violent lyrics, or lyrics promoting drug use, are all sung or rapped to a great beat. Just because you can tap your feet, dance or enjoy it with your friends, doesn't change the power of the message that is being processed in your mind and stored in your subconscious mind. So, ask yourself, how do you think listening to songs with explicit lyrics affects your character?

## It's More Than Just A Great Beat!

**Discuss in a group the lyrics to popular songs of your choice.**

What songs did you discuss with your group? List them on the lines below.

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How would you categorize them?

Positive Influence

Negative Influence

<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

Why did you choose to put these songs in their respective categories?

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## Music and Violence

The following excerpt was taken from Richard C. Monks' *Taking Sides, Clashing Views on Controversial Issues in Crime and Criminology*, page 37. This is only one example of the powerful influence music has on its listeners.

While on patrol in July 1992, two Las Vegas police officers were ambushed and shot by four juvenile delinquents who boasted that Ice-T's *Cop Killer* [a popular newly released rap song] gave them a sense of duty and purpose to get even with [the police]. The juveniles continued to sing its lyrics when apprehended.

Keep in mind that not all movies, songs, or even video games are violent or inappropriate. Even if you were to eliminate all movies, songs, and video games, there would still be other negative influences. You have to be responsible and determine how you are being influenced. Keep your eyes and ears open to the world around you. Constantly ask yourself: Is what I am seeing or hearing worth valuing? Will imitating it help to achieve a positive or negative character? Is it something worth practicing? Will it help me to achieve what I want out of life? If the answer to any one of these questions is no, then choose not to see it or hear it. It is up to you to make obtaining a moral character your #1 value.



# Remember Remember

**Violence  
In,  
Violence  
Out.**

**The average 18  
year old will have  
watched over  
200,000 acts of  
violence on TV  
alone.**

**Approximately 4  
million adolescents  
have been victims of a  
serious assault and 9  
million have witnessed  
serious violence  
during their lifetime.**

**Movie studios, record  
companies, and video  
game producers are  
aggressively market-  
ing violent entertain-  
ment products to chil-  
dren.**

# PEER POWER

**A**s you get older, you rely on your friends more for companionship and acceptance. It's nice to be around others who are fun and share similar interests and personality traits as you. Having friends is great, but friends can also influence each other in negative ways. Here's the problem. If your friends accentuate the negative and not the positive traits in their character and encourage you to do the same, they are influencing you in a negative way. This is called negative peer pressure. Negative peer pressure can come in different forms. For instance, your friend has cigarettes, and offers you one. You say, "No thanks," and he says, "Ah, come on, everybody smokes." Even if he did not directly tell you to smoke, his response can pressure you into thinking you will be an "odd ball" if you don't.

Here is another example: Your friend tells you she is going to shoplift a necklace from the mall, and if you are really her friend, you will come with her to be her lookout. In this case, you are being pressured to make a bad choice to keep your friendship. The power of peers to influence the way we think and act should not be underestimated. So ask yourself, how can negative peer pressure affect your character and decide in advance what you will say when approached with any negative request.



## Mirror, Mirror...

**W**ith so many negative influences in today's society, it can be challenging to obtain a positive character. This is where having someone who *has* a moral character to imitate really helps. Imitating others is something we all do, whether we admit it or not. We all have someone we look up to and admire. As babies, you imitated your parents in how to speak, when to smile, how to eat, and so forth. You developed habits that are now second nature to you.

As you grew older, you became more aware of your environment and others around you. You began to notice things about them that you liked and admired. Someone who you admire and try to emulate (imitate) is called a role model. A role model could be someone your age, an older sibling, other family members, friends, teachers and that's just to name a few. Here are some things to keep in mind when choosing a role model:

1. **Make sure he/she is a moral person.** This means you need to look beyond personality. Keep in mind, someone can appear to be a great person but have a negative, immoral character. A moral role model must consistently display positive moral character traits.
2. **A positive role model will motivate you to build a moral character.** In other words, a positive role model will encourage you to make right choices. A right choice is one where respect is shown in your life and also to the lives of others, ensuring that no one is treated unfairly or harmed.

By becoming a person of integrity, you too can become a role model and influence someone else to obtain a positive moral character. Just think about it, in the same way you admire and emulate others, someone could be admiring and emulating the true values and positive character you demonstrate.



# Chew On This!

“Be careful of what you see, because what you see is what you may do if you’re not on guard.”

“You are known by your actions.”

“Even if no one else notices, be satisfied in knowing you are the most moral person you can be.”



# Steps To A Moral Character

There are three steps towards obtaining a moral character. These steps when perfected can make you a:

## Very Important Person (V.I.P.)

### V = Value

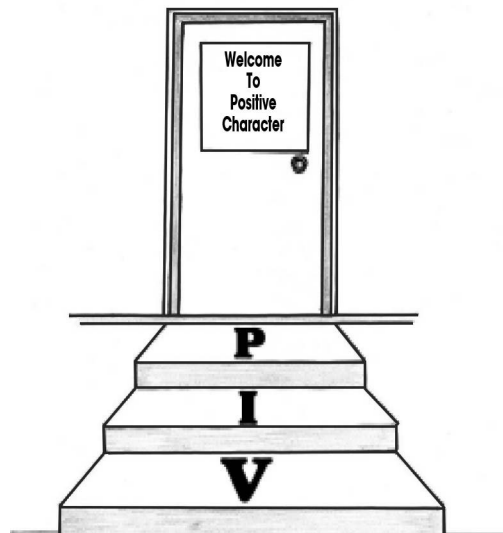
Consider what is important in your life. How can influences affect what you value and how can you achieve your values?

### I = Imitate

Beware of *what* and *who* you imitate. Imitating negative behaviors and negative people who act immorally, means that you are adopting negative character traits. For example, the main character in a popular movie always gets even when someone wrongs him. Remember, two wrongs do not make a right. If you begin to imitate this character by retaliating when someone wrongs *you*, then you are imitating negative behaviors that will develop into negative character traits. On the other hand, consider the person of moral potential you can become if you pick out all the positive moral traits and imitate them.

### P = Practice

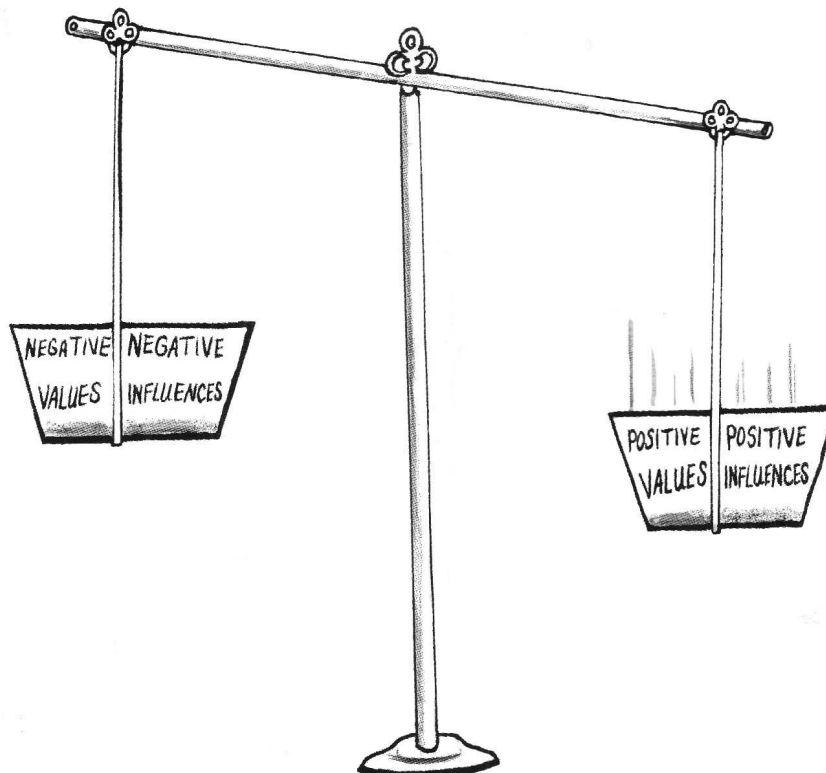
Make moral choices and practice beneficial behaviors that will build your character. Consistently practicing a right behavior makes it a habit, and it becomes a part of your character. For example, by practicing being honest, you will become known as an honest person whom others can trust.



## Value + Influence = Character

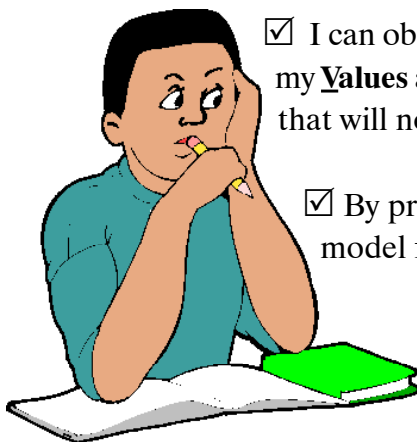
**B**eing aware of what you value means carefully considering what you are allowing yourself to be influenced by. For instance, someone who views a lot of violent movies and video games and listens to songs with lyrics that depict violence will begin to value aggression as the way to solve their problems. A person who values friends above all else will be easily influenced to do things that they know are wrong just to fit in. Bad influences are proven to have negative effects on positive moral character. If you repeatedly watch violent acts of any kind, these actions are recorded in the library of your mind. Later, even after many years, these can come back in instant replay, and you can find yourself doing the very things seen so long ago.

Are you beginning to see that it is important to pay attention and be steadfast in maintaining your true values, making adjustments to their level of importance in order to focus on developing moral character traits within yourself? We are all bombarded with negative influences every day. Some things we have control over, some we don't. It is up to us to make sure we are allowing positive influences in and rejecting and keeping out the negative ones. Do you know the expression: "Garbage in, garbage out?" Well, let's say, "Positive influences in, makes moral character come out!"



## What I Have Learned

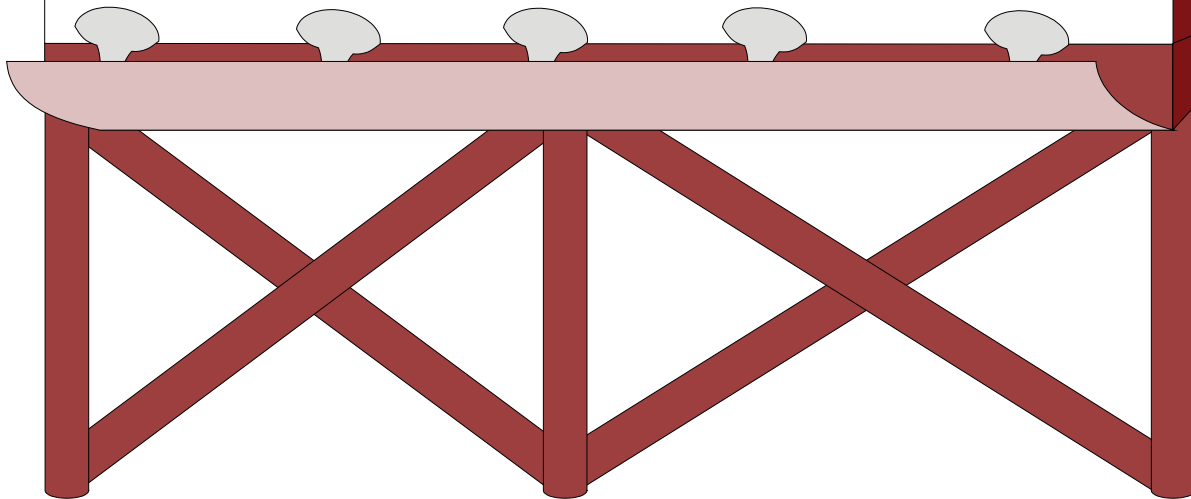
- Part of growing up means developing my own values through my own studies, in addition to what I have been taught by my parents and teachers.
- What I value, as well as how I achieve my values, by carefully weighing all the facts, play an important part in building a positive character.
- Many things can influence what I value if I allow them to do so.
- Some of these influences can be negative, and others can be positive.
- It is up to me to make obtaining a moral character my first and most important value.
- By doing this, I can then determine what influences can affect my character in a negative way.
- I now know that violence and aggression, made enticing in movies, songs and video games, can desensitize me to the horrors of violence I see in the world around me.
- Imitating and practicing violent behaviors are not ways to build a positive moral character.
- I can make the right choice and choose other means of entertainment that will not depict violence and aggression as a means of solving a problem.



- I can obtain a positive character by always considering what my **V**alues are and by **I**mitating and **P**racticing only those things that will not cause harm to others and myself.
- By practicing my VIP's, I too can become a positive role model for others.

## Enrichment Activities

1. Group work: Within groups, write and discuss different values that you may have, why you have these values and what you hope to achieve with them.
2. Write a report on how influences in your life changed your values positively or negatively, and how they affected your life.
3. A speaker from a drug rehabilitation center should address the class on risky behaviors and the negative effects they had on their life.
4. Do **“Just For Fun”** activities on pages 77-78.



# Just For Fun Activity #1

Find the hidden words.



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

CHARACTER CHOICES	POSITIVE ROLE MODEL	COMMERCIALS	VIOLENCE
DESENSITIZED INFLUENCE	SUBTLE VALUES	AGGRESSION	
		COLORS	
		BOMBARD	

# Just For Fun Activity #2

Use the clues to complete the puzzle.



			<sup>1</sup> C			H			A			<sup>2</sup> R			A			C			T			E			R																							
												O																																						
												L									<sup>5</sup> V																													
			<sup>3</sup> C			H			O			<sup>4</sup> I			C			E			S									<sup>6</sup> P																				
									N						M						L						O																							
									F						O						U						S																							
									L						<sup>7</sup> D			E			S			E			N			S			I			T			I			Z			E			D		
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<sup>8</sup> S			U			B			T			L			E															I																				
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## ACROSS

1. Your values help to develop your \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Values are important for the \_\_\_\_\_ we make.
7. Viewing violence repeatedly makes you become \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Some influences can be bold or \_\_\_\_\_.

## DOWN

2. Someone you emulate is a \_\_\_\_\_.
4. An \_\_\_\_\_ can affect your behavior or thinking.
5. What's important to you can be a \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Influences can be negative or \_\_\_\_\_.



# Chapter Four

## Now That I Have It, How Do I Keep It?

### Note To The Teacher

**T**his chapter explores that it is not just about acquiring the things we want, we must also care for, guard and protect the possessions that we treasure. In this way, we will retain their value and keep them functioning properly. Herein lies the art of maintenance. How many things do we maintain on a daily basis? Certainly our homes, cars and other valuable possessions, but what about those intangible things, like character for example. How often do we consider that our integrity must be cared for, guarded and kept in proper working condition?

In this chapter students will learn that their character is one of their most important possessions and just like any other possession it must be maintained through self-control, consistency and discipline. This chapter will prepare students for situations that could test their resolve to make positive decisions. Through realistic scenarios, that mirror common everyday occurrences, students will get an opportunity to practice responses and behaviors that will enable them to maintain their positive character.

Other concepts that will be taught in this chapter are:

- The development and maintenance of a positive character is a choice that begins with controlling one's thoughts.
- How having a positive self-concept can make one less susceptible to negative influences.

## *Unit One*

As educators and parents, we constantly remind our children that they need to care for their belongings, now we must impress upon them that they must also care for their character. Teach them the importance of vigilantly guarding their minds against the bombardment of influences that can threaten their ability to maintain their positive, moral character.

# Lesson Plan

## Now That I Have It, How Do I Keep It?

### PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

Students will learn how to maintain a positive, moral character.

### MATERIALS

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

### PROCEDURE

1. Review the previous chapter, **“The Making Of A V.I.P.”** Ask students the following questions:
  - a. How can violence affect your character? (*Violence can produce the negative character traits of hatred, aggression and unforgiveness.*)
  - b. What is meant by the acronym V.I.P. as studied by The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program? (*Value, Imitate, Practice*)
2. Guide class discussion by asking students the following questions:
  - a. What must you do to maintain a car in great working condition? (*Possible answers will include taking care of it by changing the oil, checking the battery and engine, refilling the gas, and so on. Accept as many answers as time permits.*)
  - b. What would occur to the car if you only changed the oil once or put gas in it once? (*The car would not run and the engine would eventually stop working.*)
  - c. What does it mean to maintain something? (*Maintain can be defined as: to keep in a state of efficiency; to preserve from failure or decline.*)

3. Tell students that maintaining a positive character is similar to maintaining a car. Just as we would check systems in a car to keep it in great working condition, we must regularly check our values, our feelings, and our actions so that we can maintain a positive character. Inform students that today they will learn practical ways to maintain a positive, moral character. Have students turn to **page 79** in their handbook and read the **“Introduction.”**
4. Explain to students that maintaining a positive, moral character requires consistent effort to make right choices, no matter what the circumstances are. Have students read the sections found on **page 80** entitled, **“Set Your Mind In Advance”** and **“Watch Your Thoughts.”** Then, have students complete the sections entitled, **“Quiz Time—Practice! Practice! Practice!”** found on **page 81** and **“Who R U?”** found on **pages 82-83**. Stress to students that setting their minds in advance will prepare them for the unexpected situations that could otherwise catch them off guard.
5. Tell students that there will be many unexpected situations that can arise which, without mental preparation, can catch them off guard. Have students read the section found on **page 85** entitled, **“Curveballs and Pitfalls”** and do the exercise on **page 86-87** entitled, **“Don’t Be Caught Unprepared.”** Emphasize that it is not always easy to maintain a positive, moral character.
6. Tell students that sometimes people act impulsively and say or do something they may regret. Have students read the section entitled, **“Room 2 Grow”** on **page 88** of their handbooks. Emphasize that everyone makes mistakes, but we must learn how to react appropriately in order to maintain our positive character.
7. Ask students: What are some benefits of maintaining a positive character? (*Answers will vary but may include being known as a person of integrity, being trusted, and being looked up to.*) Explain to students that earning a great reputation is another benefit that comes from having a positive character. Have students turn to **page 90** in their handbooks and read the section entitled, **“Your Reputation Precedes You.”** Stress that a great reputation is something to be treasured and carefully maintained.
8. Allow students to listen to the play found on the *Teacher’s Manual Audio Lessons* cassette, also on **pages 91-98** of their handbook entitled,

**“A Hard Lesson To Learn.”** Use the questions that follow on **page 99** to generate class discussion.

9. Encourage students to read the section found on **page 100** of their handbooks entitled, **“What I Have Learned.”** Conclude the lesson by reemphasizing to students that maintaining a positive, moral character begins by setting their minds in advance to make right choices. In addition, having a plan to deal with unexpected situations can give them the confidence to successfully maintain their positive character. Consistently demonstrating moral character traits will in time earn them the reputation of being a person of integrity.

*Unit One*

“Striving for the best won’t always be easy. But, it will be worth it.”  
 ~The Peaceful Solution

# Chapter Four

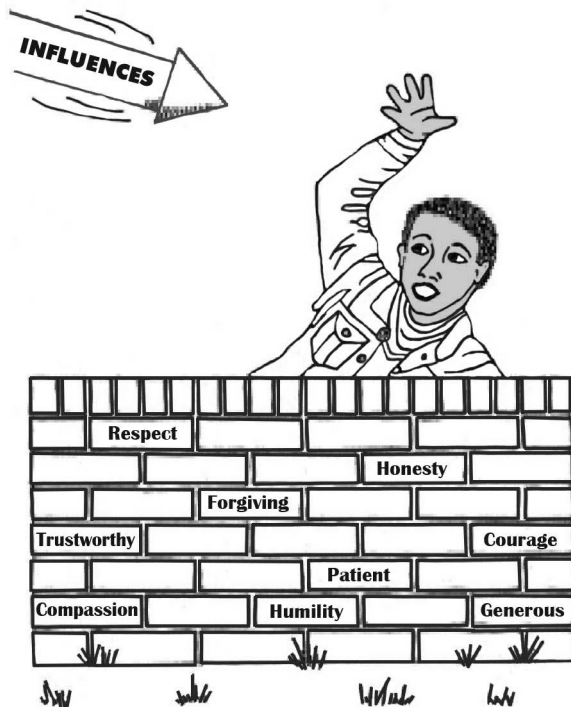
## Now That I Have It, How Do I Keep It?

### Introduction

In the previous chapter, you learned that obtaining a positive character involves what you value, who you imitate and your willingness to practice positive behavior. Now that you know the basic steps to obtaining a positive character, the question is, how do you maintain it? To maintain your character you must constantly make choices that are respectful and compassionate towards yourself and others.

Maintaining your positive character means protecting and guarding yourself from influences and choices that could lead to developing negative character traits. Maintaining your character must be done on a daily basis. Sometimes, it must be done minute-by-minute.

In this chapter, you will learn that maintaining your character requires controlling your thoughts, as well as, being prepared to deal with any situation that could compromise your character. With so many negative influences coming at you from all different directions, it takes effort, commitment, and determination to maintain your most valuable possession... your positive character.



# SET YOUR MIND IN ADVANCE

Have you ever heard the saying, “It’s all in your head?” Most people say it sarcastically, but there’s some truth to it. Whether you are aware of it or not, every action begins with a thought. Setting your mind in advance to maintain your positive character traits begins by first considering just how important it is to have a moral character. To be trusted, admired, respected and known as an honest, reliable, compassionate person is something you should want.

The next step is to make up your mind not to be influenced to do anything that will compromise your character. In other words, determine in your mind that no one can talk you into doing something you know is wrong. This is called setting your mind in advance. For example, you know that stealing is wrong. Set your mind in advance to always respect another person’s property as you would want others to respect yours.

## **WATCH YOUR THOUGHTS**

A very critical aspect of maintaining your positive character is being aware of your thoughts. Thoughts continuously run through your mind which are significant in controlling your actions and decisions. A particular thing to be aware of is the negative thoughts that may enter your mind when you feel someone has wronged you.

Some people become angrier and angrier by perpetuating negative thoughts about the person and the situation. This then can lead to a course of action to satisfy the anger.

Many people have been put in prison because they harbored negative thoughts that led them to violence or revenge in some way and caused someone to get severely hurt.

It is important, however, when these types of negative thoughts of revenge enter your mind, to immediately reevaluate them and turn them into positive thoughts that will not lead you to compromise your positive character.

For example, if someone calls you “stupid” instead of immediately becoming angry and desiring to get back at him, change it to positive thinking by saying to yourself “After all, two wrongs can’t make a right” or “I hope I’m not contributing to his having a bad day.”

Using positive thinking to reevaluate situations has great potential in helping you maintain your positive character.

# Quiz Time—Practice! Practice! Practice!

**You've been given a list of negative thoughts. See how you do in changing them into positive thoughts. You may use ideas from the list of positive affirmations below.**

## Negative Thoughts

1. He makes me so mad, I could just...
2. He was the one who told on me. Now I'll just take care of him....
3. Get out of my face, you...
4. He lied to me. He deserves to be...

## Positive Affirmations

1. He deserves another opportunity.
2. Two wrongs don't make a right.
3. I'll just forgive him. He doesn't understand.
4. If he was taught the PSCEP, he would never have done that.
5. Maybe it was a mistake.

Set your mind in advance to replace negative thoughts with positive affirmations and stick with it. Remember, your thoughts can make a difference. People who think positively about situations are more likely to make right choices that build positive character. Negative thinkers are more prone to negative influences and choices that corrupt a positive character.



Maintaining a positive character also means evaluating your choices every time to determine what character traits you need to improve. Then, practice improving that character trait at every opportunity you get. For instance, you received a poor grade on your test because you went to the mall instead of studying. You knew you did not act responsibly; so, you determine that from this point on you will study first and have fun later or find joy in your studies.



## WHO R U?

Read the following scenarios. Circle **always**, **sometimes** or **never** according to which one applies best to your character.

- Steadfast/ Persistent:** *When you are determined not to give up or change what you have chosen to accomplish.*  
If you don't succeed the first time you try, you keep trying until you are successful.



always                      sometimes                      never
- Courageous:** *The act of doing what needs to be done even when you are afraid.*  
Even if you are afraid the right choice might cost you your friend, you go ahead and do it anyway.

always                      sometimes                      never
- Trustworthy:** *Dependable and assured reliance.*  
You can be depended on to do as you have been asked.

always                      sometimes                      never
- Disciplined:** *Using self-control to behave in a proper way.*  
If all your friends are pressuring you to go with them to see the latest movie, are you able to resist them if you have other obligations?

always                      sometimes                      never
- Respectful:** *To value others as important; to be polite in your actions and attitude.*  
You speak to an authority figure politely, even if you feel you are not being treated fairly.

always                      sometimes                      never

- 
- 
6. **Compassionate:** *To care about the needs of others.*  
You refrain from name calling and teasing, because these belittle and hurt others.  
always                      sometimes                      never
7. **Generous:** *You are willing to give of what you have in order to help someone else.*  
If your friend forgot his lunch, you would offer him some of yours.  
always                      sometimes                      never
8. **Merciful:** *To show leniency or tolerance, even when others have behaved in a manner in which they deserved a consequence.*  
Even if someone hurt your feelings, if they ever needed help, you would offer to help them.  
always                      sometimes                      never
9. **Honest:** *Free from fraud or deception; truthful.*  
You tell the truth, even if it means you may get into trouble.  
always                      sometimes                      never

How did you do? Remember, maintaining a positive moral character means knowing what areas of your character you need to focus on. *Sometimes* or *never* are answers that should be taken seriously. These are areas that you need to improve upon. So set your mind in advance to practice these behaviors until they become a part of your character. Look for opportunities to practice the behavior you want to improve until it becomes a habit.

*“Stand up for what you have  
proven to be morally correct,  
even if you are the only one left standing.”  
~ The Peaceful Solution*

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# You Must Decide

**There are choices set before you everyday,  
you must decide.**

**Your character which you display—  
the real you cannot hide.**

**What you do when nobody's watching,  
is who you really are.**

**If you develop a positive moral character,  
it will take you very far.**

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**Bear This  
In Mind...**



**“Moral excellence  
isn't an art.  
It's a habit!”**



# CURVEBALLS AND PITFALLS



**C**urveballs and pitfalls are unexpected situations that can test your resolve to maintain a positive character. They come up when you least expect them and can catch you off guard. Suddenly, you can find yourself in the middle of a “bad scene,” unprepared to deal with a situation that could lead to you making a bad choice that you will later regret.

Another important part of maintaining your character is being ready to forgive people who have hurt you or disappointed you. Without forgiveness you can become hateful and try to get revenge on that person. When people seek revenge, usually the people they hurt most are themselves. Forgiving others for their wrongdoing may not be the easiest thing to do, but it is definitely worth it, because it can help you maintain your positive moral character. It will get easier each time you practice.

The first step in handling curveballs and pitfalls is to plan for them. You have already learned the value of setting your mind in advance. You could imagine some of the unexpected situations that you may encounter and plan practical ways to deal with them. This is called hypothetical reasoning. In other words, what are some typical situations that are likely to occur? What could you say or do that will help you to maintain your positive character?

Maintaining your character will sometimes require courage. Having knowledge, wisdom and a plan will give you the confidence you need to stand your ground. Don't be discouraged if you find yourself in a situation where you are the only one trying to do what is right. Remember, you must stand up for what is right, or you can fall for anything. So be prepared by making full use of what you have learned in *The Peaceful Solution Character Education* class. Preparation will enable you to avoid the curveballs and pitfalls of life.

*“Bad choices lead to bad consequences.”*

## Don't Be Caught Unprepared

Read the following scenarios. Then write on the lines provided what your positive character response would be. Planning in advance what you can say or do will prepare you for the curveballs and pitfalls that may come your way.

1. You were invited to your friend's house for the afternoon. Your friend puts on a movie that is really inappropriate. It is very violent and sexually explicit. "Your mom lets you watch this?" you ask in disbelief.

"Yeah, my mom doesn't care about stuff like this," your friend replies.

What would you say? I can't watch that. I'll have to leave.

What would you do? Go home.

2. You are standing in the lunch line, when the class bully starts picking on the girl in front of you. He begins to call her names and makes fun of her freckles and glasses. Turning to you, he asks, "Have you ever seen anybody with so many freckles?"

What would you say? That's not right, you should stop.

What would you do? Report him to the teacher.

3. One morning, as you get off the school bus, you notice a group of your friends. You walk over and they invite you to cut school with them. One friend's brother is in high school and has a car. "Come on," said the friend. "He'll take us to the mall, the arcade and the pizza parlor."

"Yeah, we deserve a vacation," said another friend.

"What are you waiting for?" ask your friends.

What would you say? No, I would get into big trouble for this.

What would you do? Go back to school. Encourage them to go back also.

4. Walking home from school your friend shows you a marijuana joint. "Where did you get that?" you ask in a shocked whisper.

"Don't worry about it. Come on. I know just where we can smoke it without anybody finding us," your friend replies.

What would you say? Are you crazy?

What would you do? Tell him the dangers of it.

5. Your friend asks you if she can look on your paper for the test today. She says she didn't have time to study and can't afford to get a bad grade; otherwise, her parents will ground her for a month.

What would you say? No, you should have studied. I can't be dishonest.

What would you do? Put my paper to the side so she can't see.

6. You overheard someone you trusted saying something mean about you?

What would you say? That's not true.

What would you do? Walk away.

7. You are at the store with your friend and you notice her putting something in her pocket. You walk over to her and ask what she is putting into her pocket and ask if she has paid for it. She says, "I do it all the time. I can't afford to buy everything! Besides, they'll never miss it. What's the big deal? Let's go."

What would you say? *No! You must return it. That's stealing.*

What would you do? *If she doesn't, inform an authority.*

8. Your brother has a habit of using your shampoo and deodorant even though you have told him several times that those belong to you. You realize he has used them again without asking permission first. You are upset.

What would you say? *I do not appreciate you using my belongings.*

What would you do? *Take them away from him.*

9. You are scheduled to meet your friends at the park to go roller blading together after school. When you get home, your mother informs you that she has to go to an unexpected meeting and needs your help in baby-sitting your siblings.

What would you say? *Sure Mom, I'll be glad to.*

What would you do? *Call my friends and apologize.*

10. While spending the night at a friend's house, you find out he plans to sneak out and go swimming in the neighbor's pool after everyone has gone to bed.

What would you say? *You can't do this. It's trespassing.*

What would you do? *Try to influence him against going.*

11. Your sister spends a lot of time writing in her private diary. You wonder what she could be writing about. One evening, you go into her room to drop off some clean clothes you just folded and you notice her diary on the bed. She is taking a bath.

What would you say? *It's wrong to invade her privacy.*

What would you do? *Walk out of her room and wait for her to return.*

12. You and your brother are expected to share the computer for school work. He has been on the computer for about an hour. You come into the room to ask if you may have a turn. He says, "Just a minute." That minute becomes thirty minutes. You find yourself in a conflict with him over taking turns to use the computer.

What would you say? *Isn't it my turn? I'll wait for my turn.*

What would you do? *Wait patiently but don't create a conflict.*

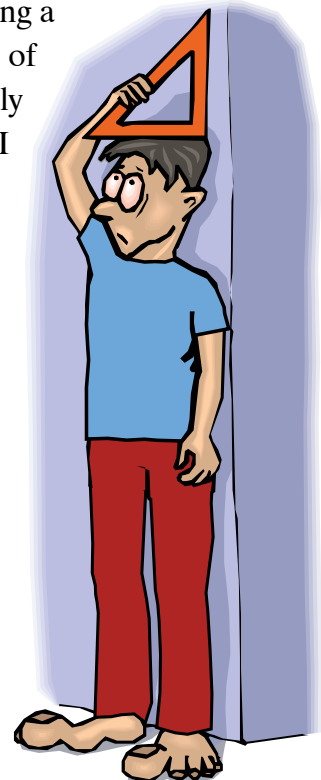
# ROOM 2 GROW

**H**ave you ever said: “I can’t believe I just did that! That isn’t what I meant to do!” Well, you’re not alone. Everyone will say or do something that is wrong from time to time. Sometimes we get our values mixed-up, or we are swayed by negative influences. We sometimes react impulsively and suddenly, we surprise ourselves, regretting the spur-of-the-moment decision that we have made without a set plan. **Impulsive** means *to act on emotions without careful consideration of the consequences of your actions*.

Keep in mind that every action, even the ones you don’t mean to do, starts with a thought. If you have decided in advance what is right and wrong, you can avoid acting impulsively by being always aware of the direction of your thoughts.

If your thoughts race in and out of your head so fast that you couldn’t tell someone what you were thinking just a minute ago, then it is time to start noticing what your thoughts are. Sometimes keeping a record of your thoughts can help you become more aware of what you think about. During the course of the day, simply write your thoughts down. Ask yourself is this something I want to have in my mind? Will these thoughts help to build and maintain my character or can they lead to choices that could result in making serious mistakes? Try to be aware of your thoughts; this will reduce opportunities to act impulsively.

Setting your mind and being prepared in advance to make right choices will help to keep mistakes to a minimum and will keep you from regretful situations. Making mistakes does not mean giving up on maintaining a positive character. On the contrary, making mistakes from time to time will occur as you grow up. With the right attitude, you can use your mistakes to help you mature and maintain a moral character... but only if you learn from them and avoid making the same mistake twice.



**Keep the following list in mind in order to learn from your mistakes:**

1. **Acknowledge that you made a mistake.** Trying to justify a wrong by not being truthful with yourself and others will prevent you from taking steps for improvements.
2. **Use character to maintain character.** If you did something that was irresponsible, then be honest with yourself, admit it and plan to never make that mistake again. In other words, you will always have positive character traits to draw from.
3. **Ask yourself, “What should I learn from this?”** Change your attitude about making mistakes. Instead, consider them as lessons to be learned. Once you have learned them, just think about how much smarter you will be.
4. **Don’t put yourself down or call yourself names when you make a mistake.** This will only lead to feeling bad about yourself, and a negative attitude may leave you susceptible to negative influences.

Even if you have made mistakes in your past that you now regret, it is not too late to change and turn your life around. Prepare so you will never make that mistake again. Remember, where there is determination, there is hope. So if you were not taught the value of obtaining a positive moral character and you have been negatively influenced, you *can* learn from your mistakes. Set your mind in advance right now to stand up and make choices that will build a positive moral character. Also, be determined not to repeat past mistakes. Instead, focus on maintaining your positive character traits.

Do the best you can to avoid making mistakes by setting your mind in advance and being prepared to handle curveballs and pitfalls. But if you do make a mistake, don’t give up on maintaining your positive character. Give yourself room to grow and consider them as lessons learned.



Don't wallow in the mud. Pick yourself up, dust yourself off and get on the right track to a true moral character.

# YOUR REPUTATION PRECEDES YOU

There are many advantages to maintaining a positive character, one of which is your reputation. Your reputation is developed over time. It is the overall quality or character as seen or judged by people in general. It can also mean gaining recognition from other people for some characteristic or ability you possess, whether positive or negative. You must consistently demonstrate and maintain positive moral character traits in order to develop a great reputation. Once a bad reputation is established, it is difficult to undo what others think of you. It is far better to maintain a decent reputation. So, be careful and pay attention to the reputation that you are building.

When negative character traits are demonstrated over a period of time, they become part of your character and part of your reputation. Do you know anyone with a bad reputation? That reputation was developed by some action others saw or heard about that person at one time or another, whether it was true or not. In other words, someone who steals will gain the reputation of being a thief and will not be trusted. People will be afraid to leave their belongings around that person.

On the other hand, a person who has earned a reputation of being trustworthy and responsible, will be known as a dependable person. He will be trusted, respected and admired for his positive character traits. As you know, word gets around whether it's positive or negative, and your reputation is no different. In fact, you may know all about someone, though it may be true or not, without ever meeting them because their reputation precedes them just as *your* reputation precedes you. People are observing you at all times, whether you realize it or not. The more others observe you, the more they put together a picture of what you're all about. So as you strive to maintain a positive moral character, you will maintain a positive reputation at the same time.



*“Don’t Judge A Book By Its Cover?  
But how else will I know what’s in it?”*

~Noah, age 11

# Play: A Hard Lesson To Learn

Vic had earned the reputation of being an honest, dependable person who was trusted by the people he knew. Will he maintain his character or will he allow the curveballs and pitfalls to wipe him out?

Listen to the scenes as they unfold to find out if Vic made the right choices to maintain his character.

<b>Cast of Characters:</b>	Narrator	Vic	Student
	Vinny	Vic's father	Mr. McCall
	Mrs. Wilson	Vic's mother	Bike seller

## Scene One

**Narrator:** Posters are everywhere on the corridor walls of the local Junior High School. Some posters read, "Vote Vic Ryan for Class President, You Can Depend On His Honesty!" Others read, "Tammy Smith for Class President". A student yells down the hallway to Vic Ryan.

**Student:** Hey, Vic are you ready for the election tomorrow?

**Vic:** You bet I am. I sure hope you are going to vote for me!

**Student:** Sure Vic, I think you'll make a great class president.

*(At that moment Mrs. Wilson, the school principal, walks up to Vic.)*

**Mrs. Wilson:** Vic, you must be excited about the election tomorrow.

**Vic:** Yes, Mrs. Wilson. I hope I'll win, but if I don't I'll try again next year.

**Mrs. Wilson:** That's a positive attitude to have.

## Scene Two

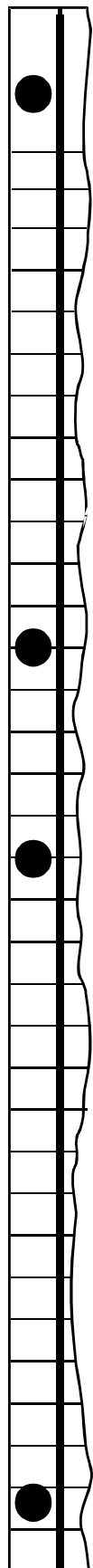
**Narrator:** Later that afternoon Vic is at home talking with his father about his plans if he is elected class president.

**Vic:** Dad, will you please look over my final speech for tomorrow? I really hope to win.

**Vic's Father:** I hope you win, too. But remember, whatever you promised to do to get elected you must do. Keep your word and do the best job you can.



*Click to Play*



**Narrator:** While Vic was talking with his father, his mother called out to say the phone was for him. It was his best friend, Vincent. Vic runs up to his bedroom and takes the call.

**Vic:** Vinny, what's up?

**Vinny:** Not much. Listen, I just heard about this great deal on a BMX. The guy who owns it needs to sell it immediately because he is leaving town for a while.

**Vic:** Well, I don't know; it depends if the price is right.

**Vinny:** Oh, you'll like it, it's a real sweet deal. Listen if you're interested, here's his phone number. Call him and work it out.

### Scene Three

**Narrator:** The next morning, Vic and Tammy are both on the stage with the principal during a school assembly to find out who won the election for ninth grade Class President.

**Mrs. Wilson:** Okay, I now have in my hand the final tally for the ninth grade class president. The winner is Vic Ryan for class president.

*(The students at the assembly cheer.)*

**Mrs. Wilson:** Congratulations Vic. Tammy, you ran a splendid race.

*(The cheering continues as Vic and Tammy shake hands.)*

### Scene Four

**Narrator:** Later that afternoon, when Vic comes home, he tells his mother all about the school election. His mother congratulates him and reminds him how the whole class is counting on him to do a great job as class president. Vic then changes the subject and tells his mother about the BMX bike. Anyone who knows Vic knows how much he has wanted a new bike for a long time.

**Vic:** Wow, mom, this is one of the best days of my life. Here I win the election and find the best deal on a BMX bike all in one day!



**Vic's Mother:** How much is it?

**Vic:** I don't know. Do you think I could call him back and find out?

**Vic's Mother:** Yes, that would be fine; go ahead and find out the price.

### Scene Five

**Narrator:** Vic is in his bedroom on the phone with the bike seller.

**Bike seller:** So, are you interested in buying it?

**Vic:** Well, maybe, but you still haven't told me how much you want for it.

**Bike seller:** I am asking \$200.00 for it, even though it's valued around \$350.00. It's a BMX, you know, and it's in excellent condition. I've hardly used it.

**Vic:** Whoa! I can't afford that much. I have \$100.00 saved up from my part-time job. Maybe I can borrow another \$50.00 from my dad, but that's as high as I can go.

**Bike seller:** Okay, I'll let you have it for \$150.00, but you'll have to get the money to me no later than Sunday, otherwise the deal is off. My family is moving out of town.

**Vic:** But that's just two days from now. I will have to check with my dad and get back to you about it.

### Scene Six

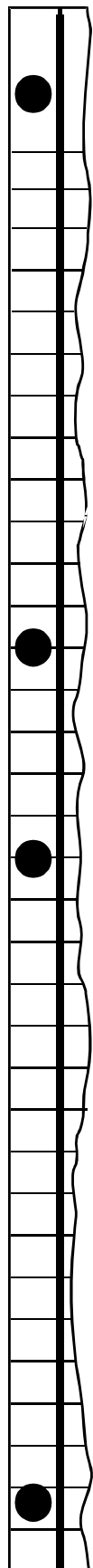
**Narrator:** Vic waited that evening until his dad came home from work and greeted him at the door.

**Vic:** Hey, dad. How was your day?

**Vic's Father:** My day was fine, son. How was yours?

**Vic:** This has been the best day of my life.

**Vic's Father:** Oh really, tell me all about it.



**Narrator:** Excitedly, Vic told his dad all about his day and the BMX.

**Vic:** Please dad, can I get it? Mom said I needed to discuss it with you. It's a really great deal, dad. Would you please help me get it? All I need is \$50.00 more. I need to let him know right away. He needs the money by Sunday because he is leaving town.

**Vic's Father:** Sunday? Let me talk it over with your mother. I'll let you know later.

**Vic:** Okay, thanks dad.

**Narrator:** Later that evening.

**Vic's Father:** Vic, I discussed it with your mother, and we think it's a great deal. I will lend you the money however, you are going to have to work it off by doing extra chores around the house.

**Vic:** That's okay dad I'll do anything you say. When can I expect the money?

**Vic's Father:** You'll have to wait until Monday, that will be my first opportunity to get to the bank.

**Vic:** But, dad, I need to have the money to give to that guy by Sunday, otherwise the deal is off. He's leaving town.

**Vic's Father:** Son, if you call him and explain to him, he'll understand. Maybe other arrangements can be made.

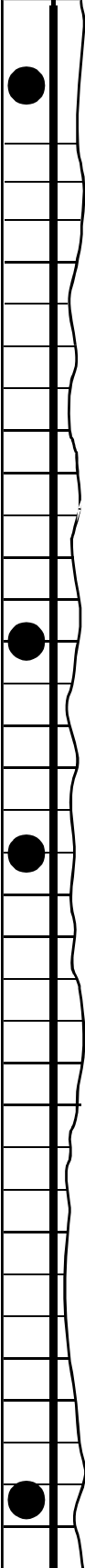
**Vic:** Okay, dad.

### Scene Seven

**Narrator:** Vic goes straight to his room to call the bike seller. He is hoping some other arrangements can be made.

**Bike seller:** I can't make any other arrangements, since I'm leaving town. Sorry, but it's Sunday or nothing.

**Vic:** That's okay. I'll see what I can do, but I still want that bike. So don't sell it to anyone else.



**Narrator:** Vic sits on the edge of his bed wondering how he's going to come up with \$50.00 by Sunday. His father calls to him, and he goes downstairs.

**Vic's Father:** Vic, it's Mr. McCall. He wants to know if you can stop by the office and take care of some errands?

**Vic:** Okay dad, tell him I'll be there.

### Scene Eight

**Narrator:** Vic is at his boss's store, McCall & Son.

**Mr. McCall:** Thanks Vic for coming by on such a short notice. Here's a list of errands I need you to do for me. (*Hands him the list.*) Look, I'm going to stop by my son's office for a while. I should be back in about an hour.

**Vic:** No problem, Mr. McCall. I'll have this work done for you in no time.

**Narrator:** While Vic is filing away some papers, he notices some cash sticking out of an envelope. He looks around to make sure no one is watching. He takes the cash out and begins to count it. He counts \$500.00. Immediately he counts off \$50.00 and stuffs it in his jacket pocket. He puts the rest of the money back into the envelope. Mr. McCall returns soon after.

**Mr. McCall:** Vic, I'm back. I can see you've just about finished with your work. I appreciate your help today.

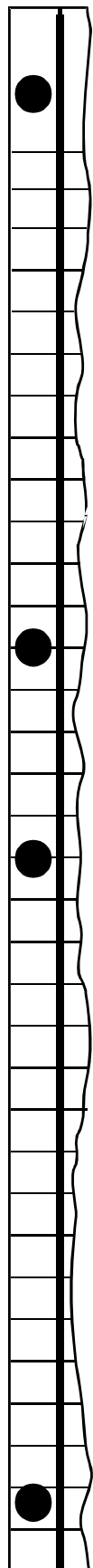
**Vic:** Yes, Mr. McCall, I'm all done.

**Mr. McCall:** Do you need a ride home?

**Vic:** No, that's okay, I'll walk. Thanks, Mr. Mc Call.

### Scene Nine

**Narrator:** Vic is in his bedroom counting the cash for the bike. His friend Vinny waits on him. Together they plan to take the bus to pick up the BMX.



**Vic:** Listen Vinny, can you keep a secret?

**Vinny:** Yeah, sure, what is it?

**Vic:** My dad said yes to the loan, however he said he wouldn't have it until Monday, which would have been too late. So when I was over at McCall's doing some errands, I came across an envelope stuffed with cash.

**Vinny:** Don't tell me you took the money, Vic!

**Vic:** No, I didn't take all of it, I only borrowed \$50.00. I'll put it back when my dad gives me the money on Monday.

**Vinny:** Borrowed? You didn't borrow it. You stole it. Man, if you get caught, you're going to be in so much trouble. I don't think you should have done that. You could have explained your situation to your Dad. Maybe he could have talked to Mr. McCall about lending you the money for a short time. Then you wouldn't have to steal it.

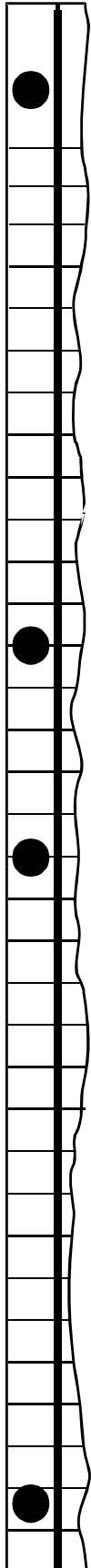
**Vic:** I know I did wrong, but it was an emergency. It's not like I'm not going to give the money back, plus McCall won't notice it's missing.

**Vinny:** But, what if he does? If I go with you and you get caught, they would think I helped you steal the money. I'm not going with you. It just isn't right. I'm going home.

**Narrator:** Vic arrives at the home of the bike seller and completes the transaction. He rides his new bike home and hides it in the tool shed in the back yard. Suddenly, the consequences of his actions start sinking in. He had a new bike, but because he got it dishonestly, he couldn't show it to anyone.

### Scene Ten

**Narrator:** The next day at school Vic is very anxious and feels very guilty because of what he had done. During his Math class he is called to the principal's office. Vic arrives at the principal's office, and his father is also there.



**Vic:** *(With a shocked expression on his face)* Dad, what are you doing here?

**Mrs. Wilson:** Come in and have a seat, Vic.

**Vic's Father:** I had a very troubling conversation with Mr. McCall this morning. Is there anything you want to tell me?

**Narrator:** Suddenly, Vic felt as if his legs had turned to rubber. With a sick feeling, he sat in the chair next to his father. His head felt as heavy as a bowling ball and his neck was too weak to support the weight of his head.

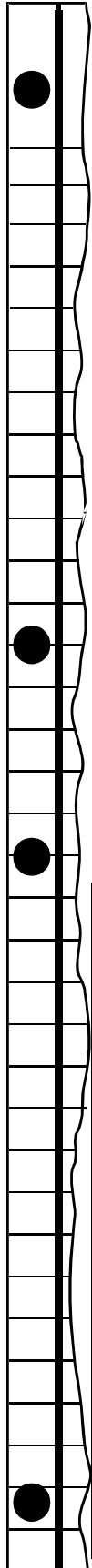
**Vic:** *(Head bowed staring at his shoes)* I guess you know. I'm sorry, dad. I know what I did was wrong. I just wanted the bike so bad, that I didn't stop to think. I thought I would just borrow the money and then put it back when you give me the \$50.00.

**Vic's Father:** I am so disappointed. If you only knew how much I wanted Mr. McCall to be wrong. I kept hoping as I drove over here that he would call and tell me he miscounted the money. Not only have you lost the trust of Mr. McCall and disappointed your mother and I, but you have stolen, and stealing is wrong. Do you realize how much trouble you're in?

**Vic:** I know Dad *(Vic wipes away the tears that are now streaming down his face.)* I know I really messed up, but how can I make up for all the wrong I've done. You, Mom and Mr. McCall will never trust me again.

**Vic's Father:** Well, maybe not just yet, but I am glad that you did not try to hide your mistake in judgment by lying. I am also glad that you realize you must make up for the wrong you have done. Mr. McCall has informed me that he will keep you as an employee, but you will work for free until you have replaced double what you stole.

**Vic:** *(shaking his head in agreement)* Yes, dad, but are you sure he's not going to fire me?



**Vic's Father:** Yes, I'm sure he won't fire you. It's great for you that Mr. McCall believes in giving people an opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned from their mistakes. He believes that you have great potential, and your past actions show that you do have a positive character. I also wanted Mrs. Wilson to know what occurred.

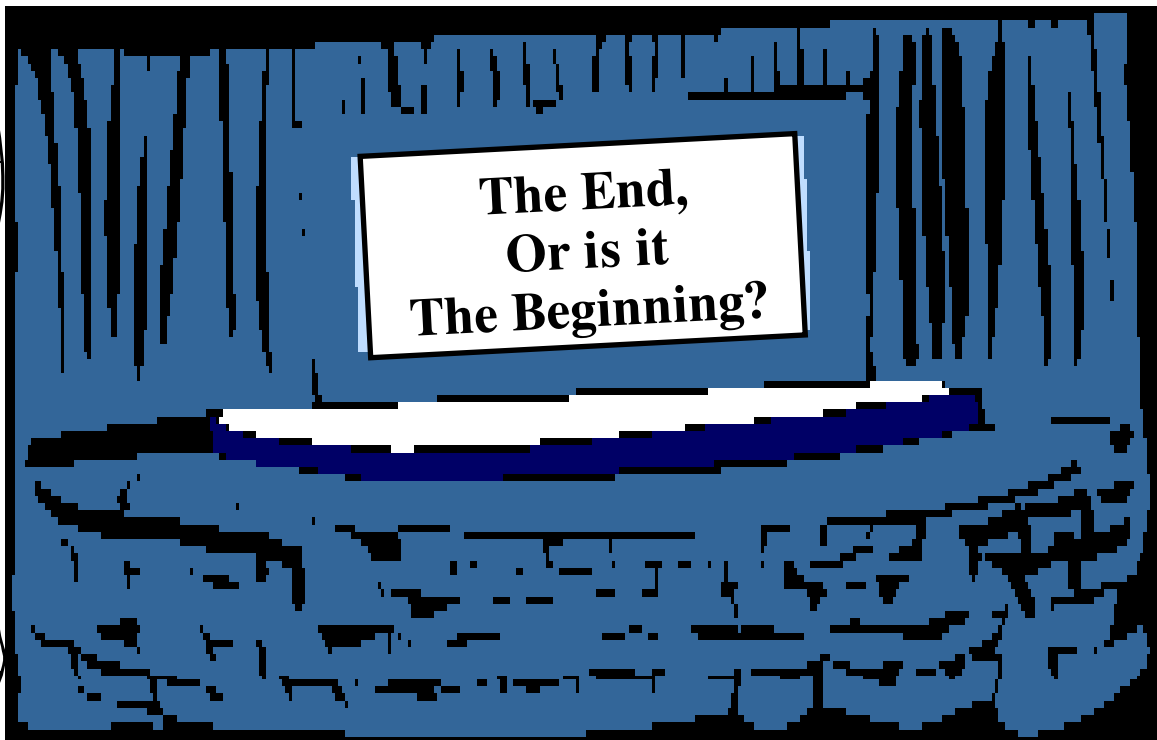
**Mrs. Wilson:** Your father and I both agree that you can use your mistake to promote honesty throughout the whole school. So the theme for your presidential year will be, "Honesty Is The Best Policy." You will develop this theme into activities so that others can also learn the value of honesty and the consequences of stealing.

**Vic:** Thanks, dad. Thanks, Mrs. Wilson. I guess the only thing left for me to do is apologize to Mr. McCall, and I have learned my lesson.

**Vic's Father:** What did you learn, son?

**Vic:** I learned that I should not steal or cheat for anything, regardless of how much I want it.

**Mrs. Wilson:** That's an important lesson Vic; and, as President, you can help others learn this important lesson, as well.



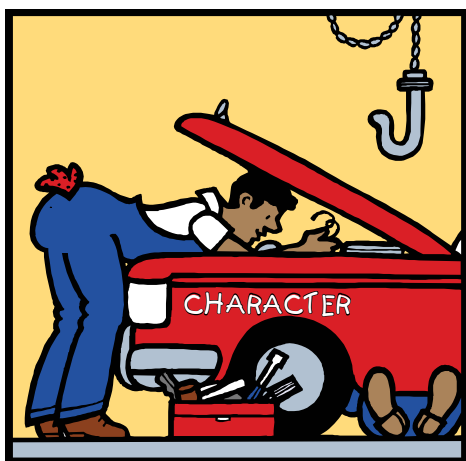
## Questions For Discussion

1. What were some of Vic's character traits? Respectful, persistent, humble.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What were some of Vic's values? a. He demonstrated that he was a responsible person.  
b. Maintaining a positive reputation was important to him.
3. Did Vic maintain a moral character? Why or why not? No.  
He wanted the bike so badly that he did wrong to achieve it.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Did Vic practice self-control or did he act impulsively when he stole the money? He acted impulsively.  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. How could he have used the principle of asking permission before taking the money? He could have discussed his situation with Mr. McCall.  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What positive character traits did Mr. McCall have? \_\_\_\_\_  
Forgiving, patient, thankful.  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. How could Vic use his experience to benefit others? \_\_\_\_\_  
Because of how his experience affected him, he can influence others to be persistent in maintaining a positive character.  
\_\_\_\_\_

***“Honesty is a policy of moral excellence.”***  
~The Peaceful Solution

## What I Have Learned

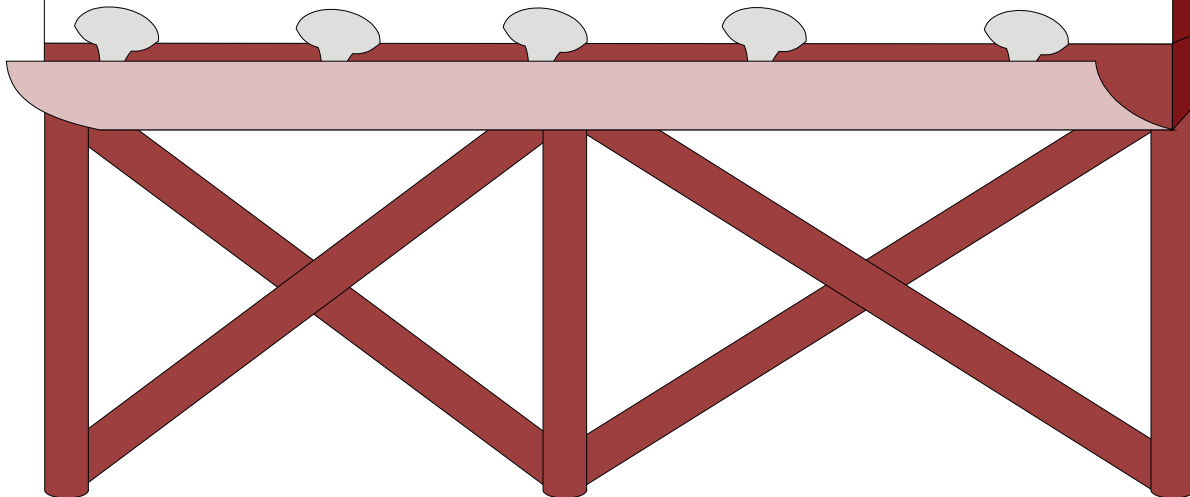
- ☑ Maintaining my positive moral character begins with controlling my thoughts and setting my mind in advance not to be influenced to do anything I know is wrong or anything that will harm myself or others.
- ☑ I must think positively about my situations and always be ready to change negative thoughts to positive ones. Maintaining true morals and thinking will lead to positive actions and help maintain my reputation and character.
- ☑ I can avoid the curveballs and pitfalls if I am prepared with the right answer. When I am confronted with a situation that could influence me to make a bad choice, I will know what to say and do in order to maintain my positive moral character.
- ☑ I know that if I set my mind in advance, I can avoid many situations that could have serious consequences. I may not know every situation that will occur, but by following a moral standard, I can readily judge all matters.
- ☑ However if I do make a mistake, I will not lie or try to justify a wrong, but I will make plans to avoid making the same mistake again.
- ☑ I will be truthful, acknowledge my mistake and take responsibility for my actions.
- ☑ I can regain the trust of others by making right choices that will help to maintain my character and by proving that I've learned from my mistake.
- ☑ By consistently maintaining my positive moral character, I will earn the reputation of being a person of integrity.



**Keep your character running smoothly. Maintain it everyday by being prepared and setting your mind in advance to do the right thing.**

## Enrichment Activities

1. Make a chart using the list of positive character traits from **pages 14-15**. Put the opposite of each trait in a column. Over a month period, place a check “✓” for each time you choose to practice a positive character trait and an “x” for every time you choose not to practice one. At the end of the month, weigh out the choices and decide how you need to build on your true character.
2. Choose three positive character traits or three you may have difficulties maintaining from **pages 14-15**. Write a report on each, creating a plan as to how to develop and maintain these positive character traits.
3. Do, “**Just For Fun,**” activities on **pages 102-104**.





# Just For Fun Activity #1

Decode each word using the decoder below. Replace each small letter in the scrambled word with the capital letter above it.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
u	s	v	y	w	p	g	c	d	k	q	t	b	a	n	z	j	x	i	f	e	h	o	l	r	m

1. zwxidifwawv  persistence
2. pnveiw  focused
3. ptwldstw  flexible
4. cnawifr  honesty
5. vnexugwnei  courageous
6. iwtpydivdztaw  self-discipline
7. ifwuypuif  steadfast
8. xwiznaidstw  responsible
9. zwxiwhwxuavw  perseverance
10. zufdwavw  patience
11. dafwgxdf  integrity

# Just For Fun

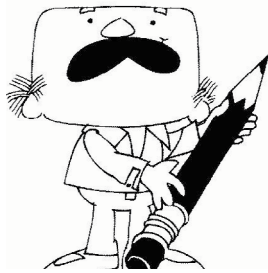
## Activity #2

Find the hidden words.



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

- |               |             |            |             |
|---------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| AFFIRMATION   | COURAGEOUS  | MERCIFUL   | STEADFAST   |
| CHARACTER     | DEPENDABLE  | NEGATIVE   | TOLERANCE   |
| COMPASSIONATE | DISCIPLINED | PERSISTENT | TRUSTWORTHY |
| COMPROMISE    | GENEROUS    | POSITIVE   |             |
| CONSIDERATION | HONEST      | RESPECTFUL |             |



# Just For Fun Activity #3

Unscramble each word and write it on the line.

1. oeitpvis \_\_\_\_\_ *positive*
2. ssaaftetd \_\_\_\_\_ *steadfast*
3. oipaaocmnstes \_\_\_\_\_ *compassionate*
4. enoguers \_\_\_\_\_ *generous*
5. banledpede \_\_\_\_\_ *dependable*
6. lrecspfefu \_\_\_\_\_ *respectful*
7. reoaecnt \_\_\_\_\_ *tolerance*
8. gsroacueuo \_\_\_\_\_ *courageous*
9. narmiatifof \_\_\_\_\_ *affirmation*
10. esntoh \_\_\_\_\_ *honest*
11. eiarcdisonont \_\_\_\_\_ *consideration*
12. ledicpinisd \_\_\_\_\_ *disciplined*
13. trtuwryosth \_\_\_\_\_ *trustworthy*
14. atienevg \_\_\_\_\_ *negative*
15. oirmpcseo \_\_\_\_\_ *compromise*
16. rensipste \_\_\_\_\_ *persistent*
17. ulmefcri \_\_\_\_\_ *merciful*
18. certarach \_\_\_\_\_ *character*

affirmation	courageous	merciful	steadfast
character	dependable	negative	tolerance
compassionate	disciplined	persistent	trustworthy
compromise	generous	positive	consideration
honest	respectful		

# Chapter Five

## The Ripple Effect: Character, Society And The World

### Note To The Teacher

**T**he ‘Me Generation’ is aptly named because we have been taught from a variety of sources to look out for number one—ourselves. Even though this is the prevailing attitude in our culture, it does not change the fact that we need each other. Our decisions and behavior affect one another. Whether we are honest or dishonest, responsible or irresponsible has a bearing on our own lives and has the potential to affect the lives of others.

This chapter takes character out of the classroom and into the community, society and our world. We need to make our children aware that character education is not just a class or an elective to take and then forget. Moral character is the backbone of a peaceful society.

Students will further explore the concept that character dictates the decisions made by individuals. These decisions have the potential to ripple outward and affect the environment and society as a whole, for the better if based on high standards, or for the worse if we give in to negative influences.

Other concepts that will be taught in this chapter are:

- Acts fueled by hate, aggression and violence cause a ripple effect of anger and reciprocated violence that lead to the destruction of lives and property.
- Acts of kindness and compassion also ripple outward producing hope and encouraging others to internalize these same characteristics within themselves.

It is important that we teach children not to underestimate the importance of a positive, moral character in the life of the individual, society and the world. A positive, moral character is to be valued and maintained by all if we want our world to be a safe and secure place for all people.

*Unit One*

# Lesson Plan

## The Ripple Effect: Character, Society And The World

### PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

Students will learn what the ripple effect is and how it can affect society in a positive or negative way.

### MATERIALS

- Construction paper (optional)
- Markers
- *Teacher's Manual Audio Lessons* cassette
- Cassette player
- Students' handbook

### PROCEDURE

1. Remind students that in the last chapter, “**Now That I Have It, How Do I Keep It?**” during the play, “**A Hard Lesson To Learn,**” they saw how not maintaining a positive, moral character affected Vic. Ask students the following questions:
  - a. What consequences did Vic face for his dishonest choice? (*He had to hide his bike in the tool shed. He could not show it to anyone.*)
  - b. Do you believe that Vic is going to be determined now to maintain positive character? Briefly discuss answers.
2. Inform students that they will explore how both negative and positive character traits affect not only the individual but also society and the world. Guide class feedback by asking students the following questions:
  - a. Has anyone ever dropped a pebble into a calm pool of water?
  - b. How did that one pebble affect the water? (*Upon impact the pebble caused a series of concentric circles, each one larger than the next.*)

Tell students that one person's actions can affect others the same way the pebble affected the water. This is called the 'ripple effect.'

Explain that our lives are interdependent upon each other. We rely on and affect one another in both positive and negative ways. Ask students to close their eyes and imagine the following scenario as you read it.

All of you are celebrating the start of summer vacation. You're smiling, laughing and talking excitedly about the high points of your school year. Suddenly, one of your classmates bursts through the door. She is sobbing and crying hysterically. The people who are closest to her stop laughing and turn to her to inquire why she is crying. Soon others notice that their friends are no longer smiling and laughing, so they stop laughing and walk over to inquire what is going on. Before long, the entire class has stopped celebrating; everyone is now focused on the classmate who is sobbing. A hush has fallen over the room that was only recently filled with the sounds of laughter and joy. Now there is only the sound of your classmate sobbing.

3. Tell students that this is only one example of how a person's behavior can affect others. Have students read the "**Introduction**" found on **page 105** of their handbooks.

Have students read the section entitled, "**The Ripple Effect**" on **page 106**, "**Violence Leads To Violence**" on **pages 109-111** in their handbooks and listen to the song "**Choose Great Character**" from the *Teacher's Manual Audio Lessons* cassette, also found on **page 112**. Have students discuss the contents of the articles and song in order to identify the negative ripple effects.

4. Explain to students that when people are influenced to engage in risk-taking behaviors, this produces a negative effect on themselves, their friends, families, as well as the community. Have students read the section found on **pages 113-115** entitled, "**It's Not Just About Me!**" Remind students that by setting their minds in advance to internalize positive character traits, they can avoid many of these destructive behaviors.

5. Explain to students that negativity is not the only thing that can affect our society and our world. Both our society and our world need and rely upon people with positive character to be the backbone for a civilized, peaceful way of life. Have students turn to **page 117** and read the section entitled, "**Positive Character Also Ripples Outward.**" Then have them read "**Positive Moral Character Can Affect The World**" on

**page 120.** Emphasize that society must have moral laws that are internalized by all in order to have a safe and peaceful world. Encourage students to make a difference in society by consistently practicing positive character traits.

6. Have students form groups of three or four, depending on the number of students in the class. Allow students ample time to create their own commercial or public service announcements warning teens about the dangers of risk-taking behaviors. Their commercial can be in the form of a skit, play or rap. Supply construction paper and markers to groups as needed for signs that will enhance their project. Upon completion, have students act out their production to the rest of the class.

7. Conclude the lesson by encouraging students to read the section found on **page 121** of their handbooks entitled, **“What I Have Learned.”** Remind them that the decision to display a negative character could lead to choices that involve crimes, teen pregnancies, substance abuse and so on. These behaviors have resulted in a ripple effect that has produced violence, fear and mistrust. On the other hand, maintaining a positive character and consistently demonstrating attributes such as honesty and compassion will result in a ripple effect of security and peace for the individual, the society and the world as a whole.

*Unit One*

*“It’s a sad thing and a sad time when we  
go to school and find war.”*

*~ Student*

# Chapter Five

## The Ripple Effect: Character, Society And The World

### Introduction

**O**ur character dictates our behavior and our actions. It is the foundation by which we interact with others. There are very few activities that we do on a daily basis in which we are not directly interacting with someone. Can you recall a day when you did not see or speak to anyone? As human beings, we need to interact and associate with others. It is this need to belong that compels us to have friends and people we can interact with and feel accepted by. It is this same need to belong that compels adults to marry, raise families and allow people to form neighborhoods and communities. When a group of people live under a common body of laws and share common values and interests, they are called a society.

In the same way character shapes an individual, it can also shape society, which in turn, forms our nation. In essence, character can shape our world. A choice, either positive or negative, starts with one person, but can affect not only that person but also a family, society, and even the world.

We live in a society where our need to belong makes us interdependent upon one another. Because we rely on and need each other, our behaviors affect one another in both positive and negative ways. Our ability to affect each other is like a stone dropped into a pond causing one ripple after the next, each one larger than the one before.



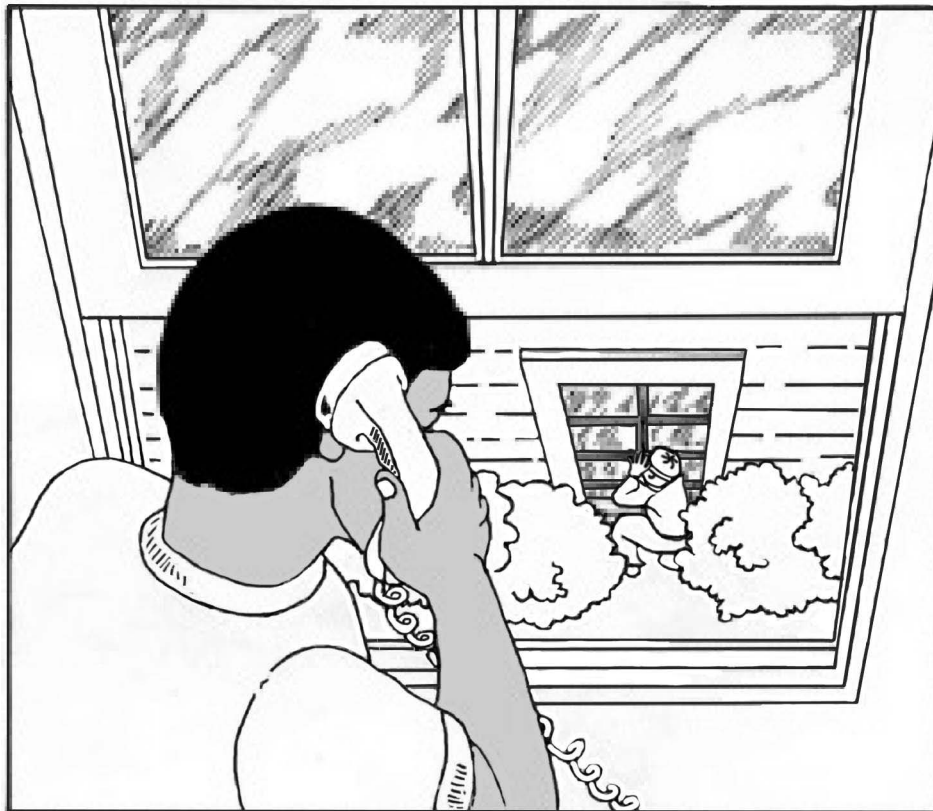


## “The Ripple Effect”



**T**wo of the most devastating results of negative character in our society and our world are violence and crime. The ripple effects from violence and crime have an impact on everyone. When a dishonest person steals someone’s possessions, the crime of theft does not stop with the victim. The victim will most likely become afraid and overprotective of her other belongings. This fear and distrust will ripple outwards to her friends, their families and to her neighborhood.

For example, if your bike was stolen from your front yard, you would surely tell your parents. Your parents would call their friends who live in the vicinity and would let them know that they should safeguard their possessions. You would also tell your friends who would begin to be more careful about their own belongings. As more and more people become aware of this crime, greater precautions will be taken such as buying bike chains and other security measures. Measures could even be taken to establish Neighborhood Watch Organizations so that neighbors could watch out for the homes of others while they are away.



Every school day more than 150,000 students stay home from school because they are afraid of being stabbed, shot or beaten.

**Read the following articles on crime. What were the effects on the community?**

### **School Safety**

April 20<sup>th</sup> 1999 marked a day that went down in history as the worst school shooting in the United States according to the news reports. Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold shot and killed 12 students, 1 teacher, and wounded 23 others before committing suicide at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado. Since this tragic event, the issue of school safety has been a hot topic. There are many school officials, lawmakers, and community members who are now demanding that metal detectors, security guards, and police patrols become a normal part of daily school routines. Many others, however, feel that the answer to school safety is to provide programs in schools and the community about anger management, and finding peaceful solutions to deal with conflicts.

Regardless of what methods are used to make schools safer for the future, the lives that were lost on that day can never be restored, and a school, its families, the community and a nation will never be the same.

### **Crime, Violence and Music**

According to public news reports, a seventeen-year old boy stabbed a fourteen-year old girl in the neck after listening to and watching a music video by a popular self-professed satanic rock star. Although the girl survived the attack, the boy could face up to 99 years in prison for injury to a minor. Community members in Fort Worth and the neighboring city of Arlington have linked the attack to the boy's obsession to satanic rock music. In response to the case, parents are being urged to pay close attention to what their children are listening to. Also, the local Crime Prevention Resource Center has created a seminar to educate school officials, parents, and law officials about the violence and crime that can result from the influence of music.

# Chew On This!



Dishonesty results in crimes such as robberies, burglaries, and thefts. When a community is bombarded with these types of crimes, no one's property is safe. Honest, hard working people suffer when possessions such as cars, money and other items are stolen. The cost of living increases because businesses spend thousands of dollars installing security systems such as burglar alarms, cameras, and security guards to protect their property. Because of this, the cost of merchandise goes up. Those \$90 sneakers might only cost you \$50 if it wasn't for shoplifters.

A lack of respect for life and a lack of compassion will result in crimes such as child abuse and murder. When these crimes are rampant in a society, there is fear and mistrust. Taxpayers like your parents, and one day you, will pay higher taxes for policemen, prosecutors, public defenders, and jails. In addition to this, children who are abused frequently grow up and, without proper education to stop the cycle, abuse their own children.

In the United States, more people die as a result of crime than natural disasters.

## **Violence Leads To Violence The Hatfields & McCoys**

Have you ever heard the saying, “violence only leads to more violence?” Well, unless it is stopped through correct education, it is true. Throughout history there have been many examples of how hate results in violence and ripples outward from one or two aggressive individuals to their respective families, neighbors, and communities. One infamous case involves two families, the Hatfields and the McCoys. According to the written history of the event in the late 1800’s, a feud started because a McCoy accused a Hatfield of stealing his pig. Although the case was taken to court and the charges were dropped, the hatred between the two families could not be so easily dismissed. The hatred and vengeance soon erupted into violence. The violence rippled outward to other members of their families and friends. This infamous feud resulted in 13 people murdered, as well as, several others who were imprisoned or executed. At its peak, this feud caused tension and divisions between two neighboring states. It ended only when the Supreme Court intervened around the turn of the century.

The ripple effect of violence can be seen not only between families and states but also between nations. Hate, violence and retaliation between nations often result in war and the killing of innocent men, women and children.

**Read the following articles and then discuss what negative character traits led to the event. In each of the articles, identify and discuss the ripple effect that was caused by hate and violence.**

### **The Rodney King Case**

The 1991 Rodney King brutality case:

According to news reports on March 1991, Rodney King, a black motorist of Los Angeles, was driving his car when he violated a traffic law. Police signaled for him to pull over. Instead of pulling over, Mr. King thought he would lose the police by driving at speeds of up to 100 mph. When he finally stopped and got out of his car, four white police officers surrounded him and beat him extensively. He suffered damages to the kidneys, skull and brain. Unaware that someone had videotaped

the entire incident, the four police officers filed a report that stated that Mr. King resisted arrest. However, the videotape showed that Mr. King stepped out of his car with his hands up, indicating that he was giving up. The videotape clearly showed that he did not attempt to resist arrest.

Because Mr. King's civil rights were violated, the police officers were arrested for violently beating him. However, the jury found them not guilty. The black population of Los Angeles felt that the verdict was based on prejudice. Within hours after the policemen were found not guilty, the black population of Los Angeles began to riot. This riot left more than 2,000 injured, 55 people dead and over one million dollars worth of damage to downtown Los Angeles from fires and looting.

<http://www.crimsonbird.com>

**Negative Character Traits:** Aggression, hate

**Ripple Effect:** Rioting

## Indian Violence

According to news reports on February 20, 2002, violence, between Hindus and Muslims sweeping the western Indian state of Gujarat, has left more than 40 dead, and the toll is expected to rise... In the state's largest city, Ahmedabad, 22 Muslims were burnt alive as Hindu mobs went on the rampage to avenge a train attack on Wednesday, blamed on Muslims, which left 598 mostly Hindu activists dead... "There is a fire inside us. Our blood is boiling," said Mangal Behn, a Hindu resident of Ahmedabad. "What is the fault of those children who died? There is a volcano of anger," she told Reuters... There are widespread fears that the latest clashes could trigger a repeat of the nationwide communal violence that followed the destruction of the mosque.

BBC News/South Asia/*Communal Riots Rock Western India*

**Negative Character Traits:** Revenge, unforgiveness, hate

**Ripple Effect:** Retaliating, mobs

## September 11th 2001

September the 11th 2001 started off as a bright beautiful summer morning. Most people who worked at the World Trade Centers in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington went to work as usual,

expecting nothing more than their normal routines for that day. However, according to news reports, that normalcy ended by 8:45 a.m. when American Airlines flight 11, the first of the planes high-jacked by terrorists, crashed into the north tower of the World Trade Center. By 9:03 United Airlines Flight 175 crashed into the south tower of the Trade Center, and by 9:40 a.m. American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon. Due to terrorist attacks, September the eleventh became a day of horror and destruction that left thousands of people dead or seriously injured. The lives of their family and friends will never be the same. In fact, the entire nation will never be the same. All air travel in and out of the United States was suspended for several days. Several buildings within a close proximity of the Trade Towers also collapsed. Businesses suffered, the stock market closed, and the economy was badly shaken. September the 11th became known as the day that changed America.

Within three months after the attack, President Bush retaliated against the terrorists by declaring War on Terrorism. This war has claimed the lives of hundreds of innocent Afghanistan civilians and of American servicemen. The President has also declared that in an effort to eradicate all terrorists, the war on terrorism will not end soon. It will spread to any nation that harbors terrorists and supports their activities.

*Newsday*

**Negative Character Traits:** Hate, lack of education

**Ripple Effect:** War



Time Magazine

# Song: Choose Great Character

Choose great character today,  
Stop the war, find the peaceful way.

Using guns and knives to kill.  
It causes pain and blood to spill.

War causes harm— It makes you cry,  
And causes your best friends to die;

I do not want to see you fight,  
Because I know it is not right.

War is filled with hatred for all,  
No one cares who is killed or mauled.

War brings death and shame,  
So stop the fighting, we're all to blame.

Choose to start moral character today,  
and live your life in a peaceful way.

**Negative Character Traits:** Hate, disrespect

**Ripple Effect:** War



# It's Not Just About Me!

Even if you do not commit a crime or perform a violent act, your wrong choices can still have a negative effect on others. Not setting your mind in advance to maintain a positive moral character can make you susceptible or more prone to behaviors that will jeopardize the health and safety of yourself and others.

- ⊗ Premarital sex
  - ⊗ Excessive consumption of alcohol
  - ⊗ Use of drugs/inhalants
  - ⊗ Dangerous driving habits
  - ⊗ Improper handling of guns
- All of these choices are Risky Behaviors.**

The consequences of choosing to engage in these behaviors will affect not only you but will ripple outward to your family, friends and even the community. Risky behaviors can alter your life and rob you of a healthy mind and body.

Premarital sex results in sexually transmitted diseases, that's STDs for short. It also leads to unwanted pregnancies, abortions, and dropouts from school. Engaging in premarital sex can mean facing the shame and embarrassment of contracting diseases such as: herpes, gonorrhea, syphilis, or HIV. Recent studies indicate that there are over one hundred sexually transmitted diseases, and the numbers are still increasing. Some of these diseases can make you sterile or kill you. Babies born to unwed teenage mothers are also more likely to be neglected, abused, and sexually molested.

Excessive consumption of alcohol, drugs and inhalants is addictive and can do permanent damage to your brain. You may have started doing it because of your trust or care for a friend, or just wanting to fit in or not wanting to be left out.



.....  
 • *It is easier to never start a bad habit than to break one.* •  
 .....

You may even think, “Oh, just once won’t hurt anything.” But, in many cases, “just once” has brought permanent injury to the body and brain. Some illegal substances are so addictive that once is all it takes, and what starts off as just for “fun” can change your life. Some people, unaware that they have a heart problem, die after trying cocaine just once. They literally drop dead. Substances like alcohol or even inhalants may not cause immediate death, but they can cause many people to do foolish things that they would not ordinarily do. In other words, these risky behaviors lead to taking even more risks that could eventually cost you your safety or the safety of someone you care about.

Engaging in risky behaviors is not just about one individual’s choice. The effects of these behaviors ripple outward affecting family members as well. The strain of dealing with a child who is addicted to alcohol or drugs or who is pregnant or suffering from an STD can be very difficult on parents and friends. Yes! Parents have feelings too; and, finding out that their child has engaged in one or more risky behaviors, they feel shocked, disappointed, and even embarrassed. They may feel helpless and doubt their ability to properly raise a child. Parents who are dealing with the one child who is having a hard time usually ignore other siblings. Siblings, not knowing how to cope, feel left out and neglected. Often younger siblings copy the behaviors of their bigger brother or sister, and soon they may also be involved in some of these risky behaviors.



Risky behaviors also ripple outward affecting the community. Teens engaging in risky behaviors frequently drop out of school by the time they reach high school. The events leading to the decision to drop out of high school usually start in junior high. Dropping out of school has serious consequences for the individual and the community. Without an education, the better high-paying jobs are forever out of reach. Most people who drop out of school drop out of the better opportunities that society has to offer. They resign themselves to a life of poverty and dependence upon governmental programs in order to meet their daily needs.

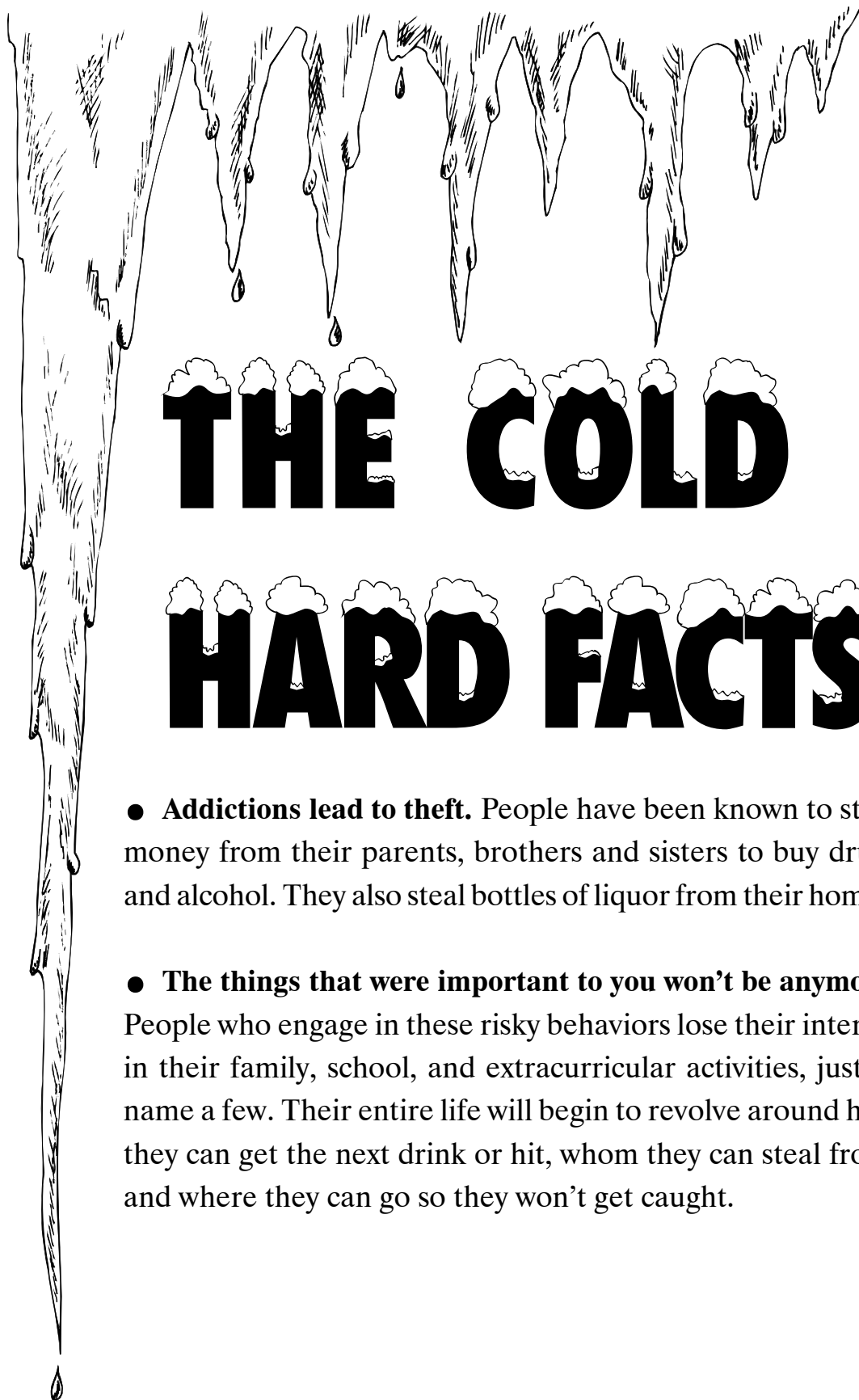
Have you ever wondered why there are programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous for teens or DARE? These programs, and many more, are

society's way of trying to cope with the ever-increasing number of teens who are risking their health and safety. These programs can basically fit into two categories: prevention or intervention. Prevention programs warn teens of the dangers of risky behaviors, so they won't be influenced to experiment with drugs, alcohol, or sex. The intervention programs help teens who have engaged in these dangerous behaviors understand why they made these choices, deal with the consequences they are facing now, and avoid making the same mistakes in the future.

For some teens, however, the consequences of making a wrong choice could last a lifetime. Incurable STDs, sterility, as well as, other physical and psychological damage are the results of engaging in risky behaviors.

Maintain a positive moral character and set your mind in advance not to be influenced or talked into trying drugs, abusing alcohol, dangerous driving or experimenting with sex. If someone offers you a joint, be responsible and say, "NO!" If someone offers you a drink, be courageous and say, "NO!" If someone says to you, "Oh come on, everybody is doing it," have enough self-respect to say, "NO!" You don't have to give a long explanation, just say "no" and mean it. Keep in mind that poor choices can affect you for life; they can also affect your family and your community.





# THE COLD

# HARD FACTS

- **Addictions lead to theft.** People have been known to steal money from their parents, brothers and sisters to buy drugs and alcohol. They also steal bottles of liquor from their homes.
- **The things that were important to you won't be anymore.** People who engage in these risky behaviors lose their interest in their family, school, and extracurricular activities, just to name a few. Their entire life will begin to revolve around how they can get the next drink or hit, whom they can steal from, and where they can go so they won't get caught.

## Positive Character Also Ripples Outward

Just as negative behaviors ripple out their devastating effects, positive character ripples out positive effects. This is how we can affect others in a positive way. When we choose to consistently demonstrate positive character, the effects ripple outward giving others hope that our society and world can change for the better. For instance, if everyone in a community decided to practice honesty, then there would be no theft in that area. There would be no muggings, pickpockets or burglaries. There would be no need to lock the doors to your home or car, and if you forgot your wallet or purse in your school cafeteria, it would be returned to you with all of your money in it.

The ripple effect from such a phenomenon would stretch far and wide. First, the number of crimes, arrests, as well as, the police officers on patrol would be greatly reduced. Since there would be no shoplifting, the price of merchandise would also be significantly lowered. In addition to this, there would be a ripple effect of peace and security throughout this community.

The above scenario may sound too great to be true, and you're probably thinking, "Yeah right, not in my lifetime." But every once in a while there are articles about individuals who choose to be honest, compassionate, courageous and responsible. If one person could learn the value of having a positive character and treating others with compassion and respect, it gives hope that others can as well. If one person can do it, why can't others? Our society calls people who demonstrate positive character traits and go out of their way to help others heroes.

In actuality, they are ordinary people with a moral character doing extraordinary things. Headlines like, "*Boy Finds Purse*

*and Returns It To Elderly Woman*" or "*Young Girl Rescues Toddler From Drowning*" ripple outward giving hope that these same positive character traits can be internalized by others.

A person may not get an opportunity to be a "hero" everyday; but, by demonstrating positive character traits in one's daily interactions with others, one can motivate and encourage others to be positive, too.

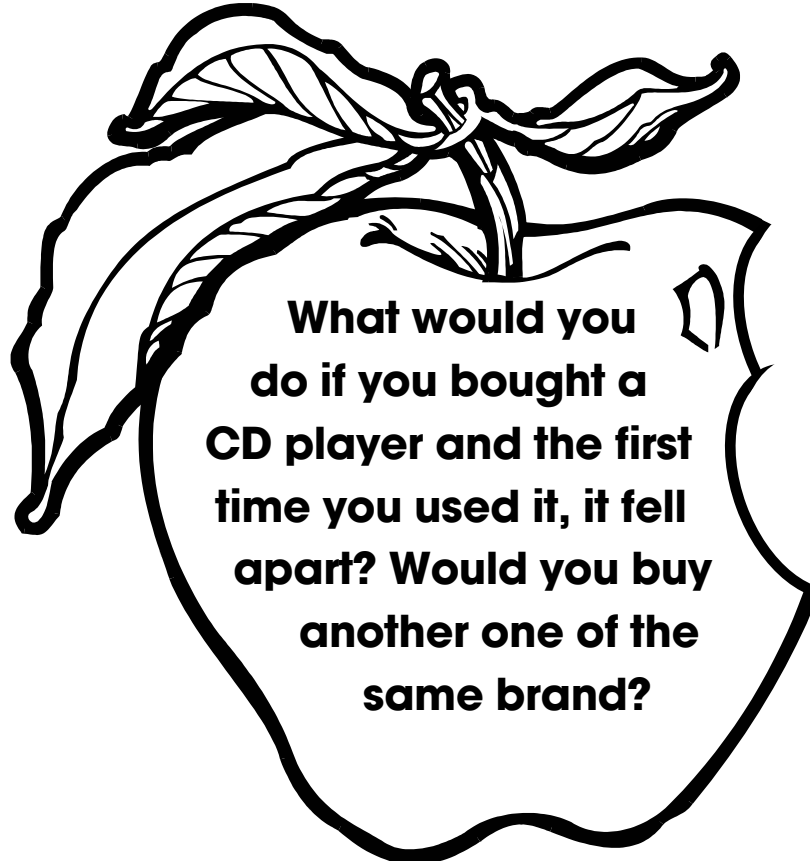


## Positive Character Is Valued By Society

**H**ave you ever read the classifieds? All companies and businesses require that their employees be honest and reliable. They even ask if the applicant has ever been convicted of a crime, and if so, what was the crime? Some companies require that anyone applying for a position with them must undergo drug screening.

Businesses are also aware that their customers value honesty and dependability. They advertise these moral character traits in order to make potential customers interested in their businesses. Any business that provides a product or a service for the public knows that no one wants to feel cheated or to be “ripped off”. They also know that if they make inferior products and are dishonest in any way, customers will no longer trust the quality of their products and they would go out of business.

### Take A Bite Out Of This...



We buy merchandise because we trust that merchants will be honest and make products that are of a high quality. The ripple effect which results from the moral character of businesses and companies is one of a better economy and a stronger nation financially.

**Read the following actual job classifieds and business advertisements. Circle all the words that identify a positive moral character.**

### Classified

Wanted: Convenience store manager. Must be willing to work long hours. Must be hard working and (responsible).	(Dependable) personal care attendants needed Mon.-Sun. Full or Part time.	Hill Resources Health Care is seeking a (self-motivated), (compassionate), (patient) Direct Care Staff who has great judgment.
Hiring PT/FT Direct Care Staff to work with the mentally disabled. Must be (responsible) and (reliable). HS diploma required. Must be 18 yrs of age to apply.	Century Theater looking for experienced, (dependable) FT maintenance person. Apply in person.	Aerobics instructor for Fitness gym. Must be (optimistic), (disciplined) and (reliable).

### Business Ads

<b>TIDY MAIDS</b> (Honest), (dependable) service. Call us for your cleaning needs.	<b>Carl's Fix It Shop</b> <i>You can rely on me for (honest), (dependable) service. Low prices. Fast and (Reliable).</i>	<b>JOE'S TAXI SERVICE</b> Known for (courteous), (respectful), (dependable) drivers.
<b>Armstrong's Fine Furniture</b> 100 years of Quality Furniture		

By treating someone with kindness and consideration, you could motivate and inspire that person to treat someone else with the same kindness and consideration. However, the opposite is just as true. Another saying that shows how we are affected by one another is “violence causes more violence.” For example, if you are violent towards someone, they could, in turn, be violent towards you and also violent towards others.

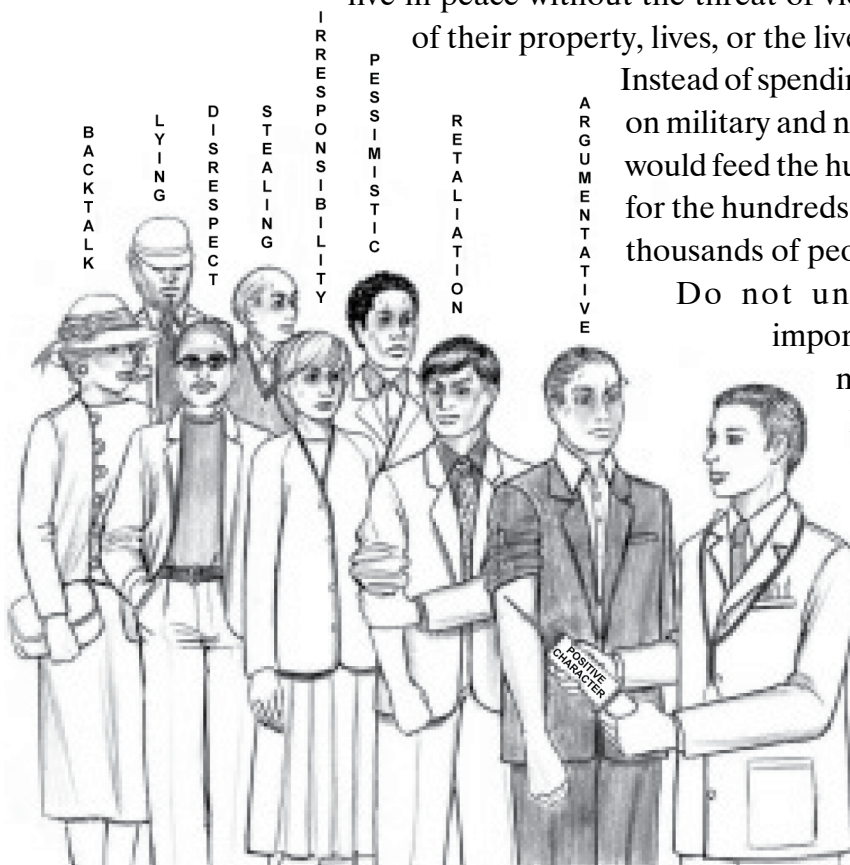
## Positive Moral Character Can Affect The World

**H**onesty, respect, truthfulness, and compassion are all positive moral character traits that, when applied to how nations interact with each other, can result in tolerance, understanding and peace around the world. One such example is the nation of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). For many years, there has been constant conflict, hatred, violence and war between these two sides. During the years 2000-2001 hundreds of people on both sides have been killed. Suicide bombers destroy themselves and anyone else who is standing close to them. The people of both sides distrust and fear each other. They no longer interact with respect and compassion.

Imagine if the people of these two nations were educated in *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*; what a tremendous difference it would make in their lives. Imagine if all the nations who are in conflict would begin to incorporate these positive moral character traits when interacting with each other. The ripple effect from this would be awesome. The fighting and wars would end. People would be able to live in peace without the threat of violence to rob them of their property, lives, or the lives of their children.

Instead of spending billions of dollars on military and nuclear weapons, we would feed the hungry and find cures for the hundreds of diseases that kill thousands of people each year.

Do not underestimate the importance of a positive moral character in the life of an individual, society and the world. A positive character is to be valued and maintained by all people if we want our world to be a safe and secure place for everyone.

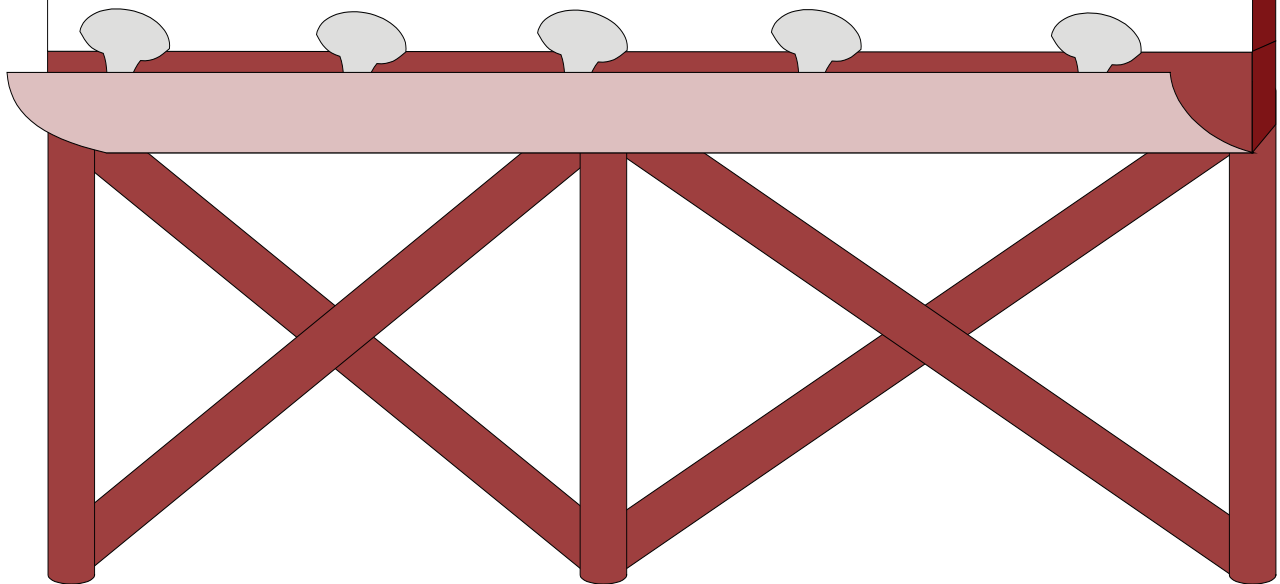


## What I Have Learned

- The effects of character, both positive and negative, ripple outward from the individual to their family and community.
- Negative character traits, such as dishonesty and a lack of respect and compassion, can lead to violence and crime.
- Negative character can also lead to engaging in risky behaviors. Premarital sex, drugs, and underage drinking can tear my life apart, and the life of my family.
- The rate of school dropouts and the cost for prevention and intervention programs are only a few of the ways the community suffers when teens engage in risky behaviors.
- Negative character results in fear, hatred, conflicts and violence between nations. Eventually the conflict between nations escalates into war.
- When individuals and society as a whole maintain and consistently demonstrate positive character, traits such as honesty, respect and compassion can ripple outward showing others the value of a positive character.
- The ripple effect from a positive moral character also produces hope, motivating and the encouraging of others to internalize those same characteristics within themselves.
- Never underestimate the power of moral character in my life, and the ripple effect it has on society and the world.
- A world that is safe and peaceful can be achieved.
- If I can demonstrate a positive moral character, then I can motivate others to do the same and they, in turn, can motivate and encourage even more people to acquire character traits such as compassion, respect, and honesty.
- Just like a stone dropped into a pond, positive moral character can ripple out, affecting others far and wide.

## Enrichment Activities

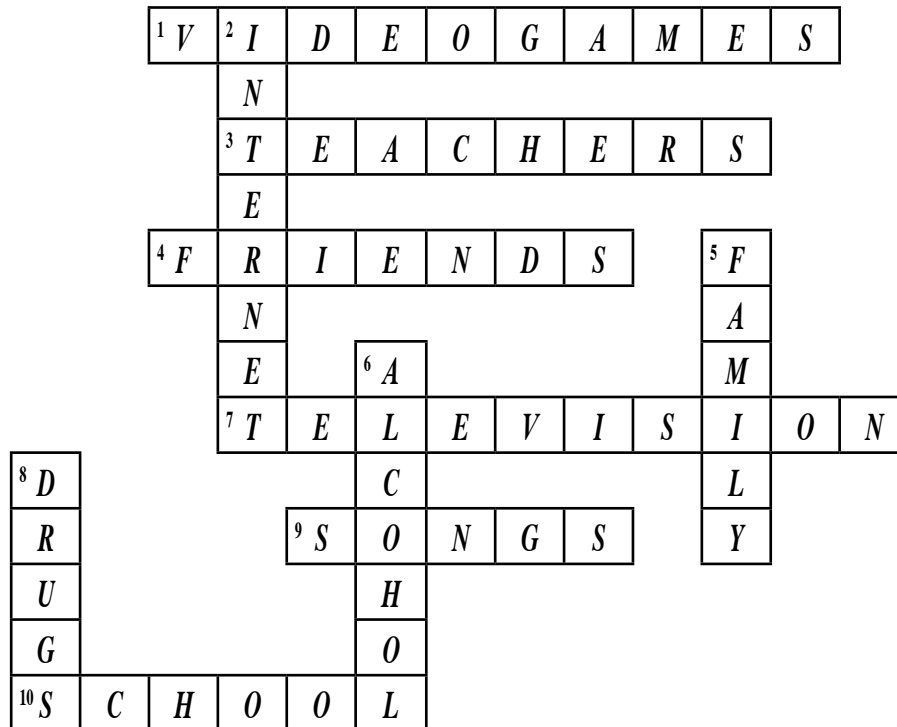
1. Do a study on the pattern of abuse, whether domestic violence, substance abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse and/or verbal abuse. Write a five page paper giving facts, using statistics and other data showing how abusers have usually been victims of abuse themselves.
2. A police officer should visit the class to talk about juvenile crimes and the effect they are having on society.
3. Research positive acts of kindness done by individuals within different communities, and discuss the ripple effect they may have had in those communities.
4. Research international crime rates, types of crime and how these crimes are affecting various countries. Via class discussion explore what character traits would be beneficial within these countries to help curtail the crime rate and how these actions would benefit the world as a whole.
5. Do **“Just For Fun”** activities found on **pages 123-124**.



# Just For Fun

## Activity #1

Use the clues to complete the puzzle.



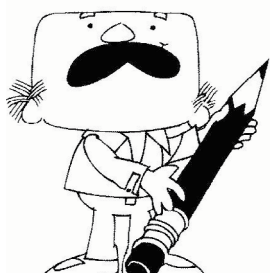
### ACROSS

- Virtual reality games that can be very violent
- We learn from them, and they are our guides to knowledge
- A group of peers that we hang around with more than others
- We turn it on, watch it, and it can contain violence and sex
- Words put to music that can be an influence on your mood
- A place where we go to be educated and influenced

### DOWN

- This can be used for learning but watch where you surf
- A group of people who all live together
- Liquid that affects your ability to make decisions if abused
- Some of these are cocaine, marijuana and speed





# Just For Fun Activity #2

Write the words that will fit in the boxes.

1. 

l	i	f	e	t	i	m	e
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

6. 

o	p	p	o	r	t	u	n	i	t	y
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

2. 

w	o	r	l	d
---	---	---	---	---

7. 

r	i	p	p	l	e
---	---	---	---	---	---

3. 

c	o	m	m	u	n	i	t	y
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

8. 

a	d	v	a	n	c	e
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

4. 

p	e	o	p	l	e
---	---	---	---	---	---

9. 

s	o	c	i	e	t	y
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

5. 

m	u	r	d	e	r
---	---	---	---	---	---

10. 

c	r	i	m	e
---	---	---	---	---

society	community	lifetime	world
crime	opportunities	advance	
murder	ripple	people	

# Chapter Six

## I Can Make A Difference

### Note To The Teacher

**I**n this chapter, students will learn that given the right motivation, encouragement and skills, they have the potential to be leaders. In fact, you have been teaching them how to be positive, effective leaders from the first chapter of this unit. It is vital that students understand that leadership is an integral part of developing and maintaining a positive, moral character. Children who are assertive, courageous and have strong moral values are better able to deal with negative peer pressure and avoid risk-taking behaviors. These children are prepared to take a stand for what is right, even if they must stand alone. Teaching leadership to our children is about empowerment. We must empower them to speak up and stand up for what is morally correct.

Other concepts that will be taught in this chapter are:

- The importance of leadership within society and the world.
- The specific character and personality traits of positive, effective leaders.
- How to use the skills of leadership to make positive decisions.

As educators, we often see children who are browbeaten, teased and taunted by their peers. Think of how much their lives could change if they learned how to take on a leadership role and assert true values to make moral decisions. Conversely, we also see children who have the ability to lead, but are aggressive and violent due to past teachings or influences. Instead of leading, they bully and coerce others. By presenting this lesson you can simultaneously teach both how to be positive, effective leaders to make a difference in their lives and the lives of others.

*Unit One*

# Lesson Plan

## I Can Make A Difference

### PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

Students will learn how to be moral, confident leaders. Students will also learn that they can make a difference in the world around them by consistently demonstrating moral character and positive leadership traits.

### MATERIALS

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

### PROCEDURE

1. Review Chapter Five, “**The Ripple Effect: Character, Society And The World,**” by asking the following questions:

- a. In what ways does negative character ripple outward from the individual to society? (*By creating crime and violence in society.*)
- b. How does positive character between nations impact the world? (*Nations would get along better, start trusting one another and eventually stop all wars.*)

2. Remind students that by demonstrating positive character traits, they can motivate others to do the same. Explain that the ability to encourage others towards the accomplishment of a specific task is an important part of being a leader. Tell students that today they will learn the meaning and qualifications for being moral leaders. They will also learn that by consistently demonstrating positive character and leadership skills they will make a difference in the world around them.

Guide class discussion by asking students the following questions:

- a. What are some of the challenges facing our society? (*Answers will vary, but may include homelessness, crime, war or poverty.*)

b. Do you feel that you can help to make our world a better place? Why or why not? (*Answers will vary but may include: Being an example by using positive character traits to interact with others can influence them to use the same. This will begin the ripple effect.*)

3. Have students read the “**Introduction**” found on **page 125** of their handbooks. Explain that leaders guide and direct others in a particular direction. Have students read the section entitled, “**Who is a Leader?**” found on **page 126**; then complete the exercise that follows entitled, “**Name The Leaders.**” Discuss who some of the prominent leaders are in the community, nation and foreign countries and what their roles are. For example, the president’s job is to lead the nation. The governor’s job is to lead the state, the mayor leads the city and so on. What are some of the advantages of having leadership and the results of not having it in these areas? (*Answers will vary but may include: no order to the society, crime rates soaring, etc.*)

4. Tell students that both positive and negative leaders are present within our society. Explain that it is important to look beyond personality traits in order to decide if a leader demonstrates positive or negative leadership qualities. Have students read the section found on **page 127** entitled, “**The Deciding Factor**” and complete the exercise, “**Identifying Leadership Styles,**” found on **page 128**. Emphasize that positive leadership is advantageous to all.

5. Tell students that they have explored the value of positive leadership within society and they can now focus on developing themselves as positive leaders. Explain to students that anyone can learn the skills needed to be a positive and effective leader. Have students turn to **page 129** and read the section entitled, “**There Is A Leader In You.**”

6. Explain to students that just like a political or community leader, their character will also define how they lead others. Have students read the sections entitled, “**Be A Positive Leader**” on **pages 131-132** and “**What Leadership Is Not**” on **page 133**. Then allow students to read the scenarios and answer the questions on **page 134**.

7. Tell students that they will now listen to a narrative entitled, “**It Begins With Me**” found on **pages 135-141**. Explain that even in a bad situation, positive leadership can make a difference. Students should answer the questions that follow on **page 142**. Stress that Greg used his

positive character and leadership skills to take the initiative to make a difference in his school and community.

8. Encourage students to read the section entitled, **“What I have Learned”** on **page 143**. Conclude the lesson by reminding students that moral character can help them develop leadership skills and abilities that can make a difference in their lives and the lives of others all over the world.

*Unit One*

*“The truth is, the only person  
you can change is you.”  
~ The Peaceful Solution*

# Chapter Six

## I Can Make A Difference

### Introduction

**H**ave you ever considered what the world will be like when you become an adult? Will technology have advanced so much that cars would fly and vacations could be taken on another planet? Will the effects of violence and crime still ripple outward causing fear, hate and mistrust, or will the value of having a moral character stop the fighting and wars? Will our society be better or worse?

Whose responsibility is it to ensure a safe world for you to grow up in? The truth of the matter is, your future is too important to hope that someone else will make a difference. It is up to each and every person to consistently demonstrate character skills that will result in peace between individuals, society, and the world. This is the only way to ensure that your future society will be safe and secure for all people.

In this chapter, you will explore how character, along with positive leadership skills, will enable you to make a difference in your life and the life of others. You can make a difference. Start today.

*A journey of a thousand  
miles begins with one step...*

# Who Is A Leader?

“Take me to your leader, earthling!” Apparently even little green men from ‘Mars’ know the value of leaders within a society. In ancient and modern times, the need for leadership has always been important. Without strong leaders, a society lacks guidance and direction. All through history, certain people were designated to guide and direct others in a particular direction. These people were called leaders. They have authority over and are responsible for those who follow them. Leaders are not defined by age, gender or nationality. **Leaders are simply people who possess qualities and skills that motivate and encourage others towards specific goals.**

Leaders can be found in all areas of our society. There are religious leaders, governmental leaders, community leaders, political leaders and even gang leaders. Some leaders are responsible for an entire country, while others are responsible for a small city. Some leaders have a lifetime position in the office they were chosen to govern, while others are there only for a specified time.

## Name The Leaders

**Looking at the news or reading the newspaper can help you to identify some leaders in the following areas.**

1. Who leads your nation? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Who leads your town or state? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you know any other political leaders? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Who are the religious leaders in your community? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Who are some leaders in foreign countries? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# THE DECIDING FACTOR

**W**e are literally surrounded by leaders. In every activity, organization, town and nation there are leaders. Regardless of whether someone is the president of an organization or the coach of the football team, their leadership style will basically fall into one of two categories, positive or negative. Leaders, just like everyone else, can have both great and bad character and personality traits. Remember a great personality does not guarantee a great character.

You can always tell a positive leader from a negative one by the outcome of their actions, beliefs and ideologies. Negative leaders lack integrity. They may be selfish, or lack compassion and respect for life. They usually consider only their own opinions or those who reflect their opinions. They don't exemplify to their followers the importance of achieving a positive moral character and the benefit of attaining positive goals. In many instances, negative leadership has resulted in hatred, violence and death.

Positive leaders, on the other hand, are people of integrity. They maintain and demonstrate their positive moral character consistently through their beliefs, attitudes and actions. They motivate others to also attain positive moral characters and to strive towards excellence in all areas of their lives. In addition to this, positive leadership will result in a ripple effect that will be advantageous not only to the individual but to society as a whole.

Hence, the deciding factor between a positive and a negative leader is the same thing that decides the quality, either positively or negatively, of all people ...

**Character!**

## Identifying Leadership Styles

Using the brief description of some of the accomplishments of the following leaders, identify if they demonstrated positive or negative character traits by placing a P or N respectively in the spaces provided.

  N   **Adolph Hitler** sought to build what he classified as a superior race. To do so, he had 9 Million people murdered.

  N   **Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos**—Leaders of the Philippines for twenty years. It was reported that this couple stole an estimated 5 billion dollars from the country’s national fund.

<http://www.mfinley.com/articles/imelda.htm>

  P   **Mohandas Gandhi**—(1869-1948) Indian Nationalist Leader. Gandhi used nonviolent means to try to change the treatment of the Indian people. His idea that peace can bring about change attracted worldwide attention to the plight of his people.

<http://encarta.msa.com>

  N   **Chilly was the leader of the Bloods**, a gang occupying the lower East Side. Chilly would routinely order his followers to “beat down” anyone found out at night if they wanted to stay in the gang.

  P   **Martin Luther King Jr.**—Civil Rights leader encouraged the use of nonviolent actions to protest discrimination. King’s opposition to segregation and racial discrimination brought worldwide attention to the plight of black Americans. He was awarded the 1964 Noble Prize for peace.

  N   **Francois “Papa Doc” Duvalier**—Self-elected leader of Haiti between 1957-1971. It was reported that he created a task force to kill and brutalize anyone who opposed him. He stole millions of dollars from his country while his people died of starvation and disease. He promoted only those who supported him and family members to offices within the government. During his reign, 30,000 Haitians died because of his rule.

1. Choose one of the leaders whose character traits you identified as *positive*. List three of those traits.   Mohandas Gandhi  

  generous, patient, steadfast  

2. Choose one of the leaders whose character traits you identified as *negative*. List three of those traits.   Adolph Hitler  

  selfish, violent, hateful

# THERE IS A LEADER IN YOU

**O**f course, not everyone will become a government, community or religious leader, but in every person's life, there will be opportunities to lead. Have you ever considered that your teacher is a leader? If your parents supervise others, or are managers on their jobs, then they too are leaders. You also may be called upon to be a leader. The fact is, leading others does not have an age limit. So, regardless of how young or old you are, you can learn how to lead and value being a positive leader. Sooner or later everyone is asked to lead in one way or another. You may be asked to lead a group project, or you may be chosen as captain of a team, so be prepared.

One of the keys to learning how to lead is to maintain your positive character. You may suddenly find yourself in a situation where everyone else is doing the wrong thing. Knowing how to be a positive leader can help you get yourself and others out of a bad situation. Sometimes making a difference means taking the initiative and having the courage to stand up for what is right. You never know when, through your positive leadership, you may encourage someone else to make a right choice.



**True leaders rise to the occasion.**

## A Potential Leader Won't Mind Being Trained

Not a born leader? Join the crowd. Most people aren't either; but, don't let that discourage you from learning how to lead. There are many things we are born *not* knowing how to do, such as reading, writing, or even riding a bike. Learning these skills may have been difficult at first, but you not only learned how to do them, you learned how to do them well.

Leading others requires character, personality and skills, but to be the very best, you must develop a positive character and a harmless, helpful personality. You already know that you must maintain and develop a positive character on a daily basis. As for skills, well, you can learn the skills relevant to leadership in the same way you learned all of your other skills. You practice, practice, practice.

**Here are a few simple steps to keep in mind:**

- 1. Set your mind in advance that you can be a positive leader.**
- 2. Value how learning to lead can help you maintain a positive character.**
- 3. Don't quit trying.**

If you have experienced being in a leadership position, for instance, being the class leader or club president, then you are well aware of how much responsibility it takes to be a leader. Remember, there are both positive and negative leaders. What category does your leadership style fall into? Do you motivate others to apply their positive character traits to achieve their goals? Do you treat those who look to you for guidance with respect and compassion? Think carefully about these questions, because being a positive leader includes all of these and more.

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### **Bear This In Mind!**

**“Leaders are responsible for themselves and for those who look up to them.”**



# BE A POSITIVE LEADER!

All positive leaders share specific qualities and skills. How many of these character traits and skills do you have?

- 1. Positive leaders lead by example.** That's right. First, you must walk the walk and talk the talk before you tell someone else what to do. For example, remembering to practice self-control by not touching another's belongings without permission can show your peers, by example, how to practice self-control as well.
- 2. Positive leaders are respectful.** They are respectful to authorities, to their peers and to themselves. Beware of someone who is in a position of leadership and is disrespectful to his parents, teachers, or any other form of authority.
- 3. Positive leaders are responsible for their actions.** The characteristic of being responsible is a combination of following through on your task and being responsible for your actions. It also includes not blaming others for your mistakes but learning from them.
- 4. Positive leaders are compassionate.** Effective leaders care about others in the same way they care about themselves. They take the time to alleviate suffering wherever they can.
- 5. Positive leaders are diligent and steadfast.** In other words, they don't give up just because things may get difficult. If something is worth pursuing, it is worth pursuing with all of your might. For example, a leader might think something that seems impossible may just take a little longer to do.
- 6. Positive leaders are decisive.** Did you ever meet someone who could not make up his or her mind? Frustrating isn't it? Positive leaders make decisions and then follow through with the decisions they have made.
- 7. Positive leaders are humble.** Even when they are the ones who



make the rules such leaders show, by example, that they too, are steadfast in keeping them. They also listen to concerns or advice on which to base decisions.

8. **Positive leaders are assertive.** In other words, a positive leader must be courageous and respectfully use his positive character to guide others in the right directions, maintaining his stance amidst opposition.
9. **Positive leaders have confidence.** A positive leader must be confident in the guidance he is leading others with. He must be certain at all times that it is based on moral character that will bring benefit to all.
10. **Positive leaders use all of their positive character traits to motivate and encourage others.** When you interact with others as a person with integrity you encourage others to do the same. Negative leaders often use fear and intimidation to motivate their followers to choose a specific course of action. Eventually negative leadership will lead to resentment and even violence. So be positive and display a positive attitude. The results will be greater than you can imagine.

When you develop positive, moral character, you will motivate and encourage others with the same zeal and with the best interests of all involved. Foremost in your mind, be guided by the true values of *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* that you learned.

## Here Are A Few Other Points To Keep In Mind

To be placed in a position of leadership is a great responsibility and should never be treated lightly. The measure of those who have a positive character and are great leaders is their ability to respect those who look to them for guidance. Remember without followers, there are no leaders, so treat everyone with respect and consideration.

Keep in mind that positive leaders will demonstrate their leadership skills even if they are not the leader of a club or team. When you are a positive leader, you are confident that you can make decisions that will support your positive character and, by example, encourage others to do the same.



## What Leadership Is NOT:

1. Leadership is not bossing people around.
2. Leadership is not using fear or threatening people to do things. This is called being a bully.
3. Leadership is not about benefiting oneself, but rather based on showing concern to all those involved. Remember one of the attributes of being a great leader is to recognize and encourage others to use their skills and learn from others.

Leadership is the quality of how leaders lead. The following acronym will help you remember the qualities of positive leadership.

**L** = Learn: Learn all you can about the world around you.

**E** = Encourage: Encourage others to be their best.

**A** = Attitude: Your attitude counts for a lot. Let it be positive!

**D** = Diligent: Be diligent. Never give up.

**E** = Excellence: Strive for excellence in all that you do.

**R** = Ready: Be ready to be an example of positive, moral character to others.

**S** = Sure: Be sure that your values are positive and moral.

**H** = Humble: Be humble. Even leaders have to be followers.

**I** = Initiative: Take the initiative and make the right decision, even if no one else will.

**P** = Positive: Maintain a consistent, positive moral character and attitude.

**Read the following scenarios then answer the questions that follow.**

1. LeTisha was elected to be the treasurer for the fund-raising club. She was given the responsibility to collect all dues on a weekly basis. Several members forgot to pay their dues. LeTisha reminded them by sending them notes threatening them if they didn't pay the next week.

- Was LeTisha demonstrating positive or negative leadership? Explain your choice.

Negative. She used threatening—not a quality of a positive leader.

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2. After P.E., Richie and his friend Keith were asked by two other guys to cut classes for the rest of the day. “Come on, our next class has a substitute teacher. She won't take attendance. Nobody will even miss us.”

Keith turned to Richie and said, “Come on let's go. We need a break.”

“No, I think I'll pass. I'll get a break on the weekend, and besides guys, if you get picked up for truancy, your parents will find out, and it will go on your permanent record. I'd think about it if I were you.” Richie replied.

The other boys reluctantly agreed and decided to go to class.

“You sure are a loser,” said Keith.

Smiling, Richie replied, “Yeah, but I'll be a loser with a clean record.”

- Who demonstrated positive leadership skills? Explain your choice.

Richie. He influenced his friends to make the correct decision.

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3. Sandra's teacher put her in charge of the group project. Sandra's group consisted of four of her classmates. Sandra assigned everyone their duties. Carl had research, Joanne had art, Phillip was in charge of supplies and Sandra, in addition to being the group's leader, had typing. The group had four weeks to complete the project. Every other day Sandra checked to see what progress the members of her group were making. She regularly scheduled group meetings to discuss any concerns, and she listened to everyone's ideas. Everything went so smoothly that Sandra's group handed in their project early, and everyone received an A for their part in the project.

- Did Sandra exhibit positive or negative leadership? Explain your choice.

Positive. She demonstrated a sense of responsibility towards her work and compassion towards her peers.

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Listen to the following narrative about a young boy who had the skills of leadership and answer the questions that follow.

## Narrative: It Begins With Me

It was the third gunshot we had heard in the last hour. The streets of Portland had gotten so bad Mom and Dad would no longer let us go outside to play after school. And on an evening such as this one where there were frequent sounds of gunfire, my sister and I had to play on the floor and stay away from the windows.

Just last week, Julio Alvarez, one of my classmates, was killed in a drive-by shooting. I'm only 11, but Julio is the fourth person I know who was killed either in a drive-by shooting or in a gang fight.

Oh, by the way, my name is Greg, Greg Evans Jr., but everybody calls me Spunky.

My neighborhood is called Southside. I'm sure that if my parents knew that it would be smack in the middle of two rival gangs, they probably would have chosen some other place to live. But eight years ago when we moved here, it was a pretty quiet place. I barely remember back then. By the time I was five, things had already gotten really bad in my neighborhood.

I'll always remember my first day at P.S. 145. Most kids remember their first day at school because of their teacher or the other kids. Me, I remember the first day of school because when I got home that day there was an ambulance and two police cars parked across the street from my building. Their lights were flashing, and a crowd had gathered. Mrs. Henry who lived across the street from us was screaming and crying. Her eldest son and a lady I didn't recognize were trying to hold her up, but she was crying so hard that she collapsed and sunk to her knees in the street. Until that time I had never seen a grown-up cry. I remember grabbing my mother's hand, and I started to cry, too. My mother picked me up and carried me up the stairs to our apartment on the first floor.

When Dad came home that evening, my mom told my dad what had occurred.

"Alvin," Mom said in a voice that trembled with fear. "Mrs. Henry came home and found her son shot to death. Shot to death, Alvin! Someone walked into that dear woman's home and murdered her youngest son."



After a long pause I heard my dad say in a sad whisper, “What’s this world coming to?” After another long pause he said, “I heard he was mixed up with some gang down on Fifteenth Street. Something must have gone wrong.”

“I’m not sure I want to keep living here. I don’t want to live in a place where someone was murdered right across the street from us,” my mom replied.

Reaching out, my dad hugged my mom and said, “Where can we go, Jocelyn? There’s violence all around us, and this is the only place we can afford to live right now.” I remember hearing my mom crying. Mom was the second grown-up I had seen cry in one day.

Six years later, it’s still the only place we can afford to live. Not too long after that my sister Veronique was born, and since then Dad has gotten laid off at least three times that I know of. Yeah, life hasn’t been too easy on the Evans family, but I know one day it’s going to change.

Now, I’m in John Adams Junior High. I started the sixth grade one month ago. Aside from seeing a bunch of fights, I guess I’m getting used to being in junior high. It’s a lot more work than in Elementary School, and we have to switch classes every 45 minutes. I really like Mrs. Moore’s class. She teaches creative writing and I have always loved to write. I like writing and reading. I guess I like math too but, if I had to choose, writing and reading would definitely come first.

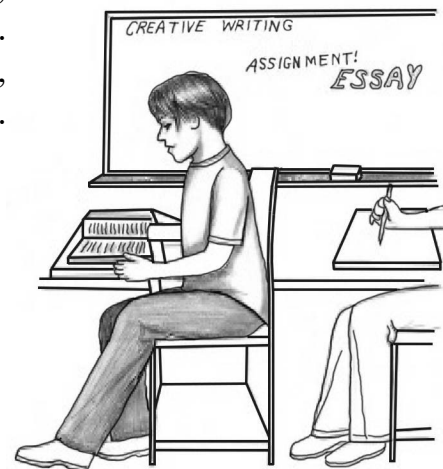
On Tuesday, our assignment was to write a two-page essay about the effects of violence on our lives and what we could do to change it. We had until Friday to turn it in.

On the bus ride home from school that day a fight broke out between Juan Rodriguez and Jamal Cole. They started cursing and calling each other names. The school bus aid didn’t say a word. The last time she tried to break up a fight she got pushed down and ended up on the floor of the bus.

“Man, you need to go back to Puerto Rico. Nobody wants you here,” Jamal said. He hated Juan so much that his face was distorted. Believe me, he was pretty scary looking and big for his age. I couldn’t believe that Juan was going to take him on.

“Juan,” I said quickly, “just leave it alone, man. Just ignore it.”

“No, mi amigo, I am tired of this.” Juan replied turning to look at me. “Everyday he says something to me. It’s not right.”



Turning back to Jamal, Juan replied, “Estupido! Why don’t you go back to Africa?”

At that point, Jamal lunged over the seat. The other kids who were sitting near them scrambled over the seats to get away from Jamal and Juan as they started punching each other. Some kids were even stepped on if they didn’t move fast enough. I just missed getting slammed in the head. Then suddenly, the kids started chanting, “fight, fight, fight.” Both boys were hitting each other in the face and head, and neither had a way to retreat. Juan, the smaller of the two, was beginning to falter, and his punches were getting weaker with each passing second.

The bus aid was screaming over the chants for the bus driver to pull over and call 911. I don’t think he heard her, but looking in the rear view mirror, he could pretty much figure out what was going on. Using his two-way radio he called the dispatch, while at the same time guided the bus over two lanes of traffic onto the shoulder of the road. Parking the bus, the driver made his way down the aisle to where Jamal was hammering Juan into the seat.

“Alright, break it up! I said break it up, now!” The driver yelled. Reluctantly the kids made room for him to squeeze through. Reaching Jamal, the driver grabbed him up and pulled him off Juan.

“Man, let me go. He started it. He said we should go back to Africa. He needs another blow!” Jamal yelled, with spit flying from his mouth and sweat dripping down his face. By now the noise and yelling had subsided, and we could hear the sounds of the police siren as they approached the bus.

Dragging Jamal down the aisle and off the bus, the driver said mockingly, “Yeah, and you had nothing to do with it, huh? You were just defending your people. Yeah, well I don’t need you to defend me against a boy half your size. You want to change people, then think right, act right, do right! Boy, learn to use your hands for something other than a weapon. The only place your attitudes will take you is prison.”

In the meantime, the bus aid began attending to Juan whose face was bloody. Both eyes had already begun to swell shut. He even seemed as if he didn’t know where he was.

“Juan,” I said softly. “I’m sorry.” It was all I could say. I kept repeating those three words over and over. I know I wasn’t to blame. I tried to help, but my dad always says, you can’t force someone to do something, all you can do is encourage them.

The police and ambulance pulled up ahead of the bus. Two uniformed officers approached the driver who was still holding Jamal by

the back of his shirt. “Get off me,” Jamal kept yelling. Of course, neither the driver, nor the officers were paying any attention to him. Jamal ended up getting arrested for aggravated assault, and Juan was taken in an ambulance to the nearest hospital. The paramedics were afraid he might have a concussion.

By the time I got home it was way past 5 o’clock and my mom was frantic. She was standing on the step with the phone in her hands. Even though she saw the bus drop me off at the corner, she still had a worried expression on her face.

“Greg, why are you so late? I just called your father.” Mom said, as I climbed up the steps.

“There was a big fight on the bus and Juan got hurt, Mom,” I said, fighting back tears. “He probably has a concussion and Jamal was arrested.”

My mom hugged me and said, “I’m glad you weren’t hurt and I’m sorry to hear about Juan. You two are like brothers. We’ll call his mother tonight to make sure he’s alright.” Patting my back to comfort me, she continued, “This is the third fight on the bus since school began. If they don’t find a way to control those children, someone is going to be killed.”

After supper, my sister and I cleaned off the table and did our chores. My mom called Juan’s mother. Juan was going to be alright. He’ll miss a week of school, but he’ll be fine. I felt a lot better knowing my friend was going to be okay, but what about the next time? What if Jamal tried to “jump” him again? I felt sad all over again.

Around 8:30 I finally got to sit down to start my homework. Checking my assignment book, I realized I had forgotten about the essay that was due on Friday. I read over the topic again; and, it occurred to me that with all the violence that I have witnessed, no one had ever asked me what I thought about it or even what I would want to do to change it.

I thought about it for a while. I thought about the kids I knew who had died in drive-bys and gang wars. I thought about the fight I saw today and the countless other fights I had seen. I thought about that time last year when some guy put a gun to my head and made me give him my brand new pair of Nikes. I thought about my little sister, who came home the other day crying because a second grader had pushed her down. I didn’t realize I was crying until I felt a tear land on my hand. That one teardrop made me realize how much the violence I had seen affected me.

Finally, I picked up my pen and began to write. I wrote, and wrote. I wrote about Mrs. Henry, and about Julio, about Juan, and about Jamal. Then I wrote about what I would do to stop the anger, hatred

and violence. Because, once I thought about it I couldn't say for sure if the next stray bullet wouldn't have my name on it, or if the next time I'm held up the dude wouldn't pull the trigger. I was glad Mrs. Moore assigned the essay. I knew now that I wanted to make a difference. I knew I could if I tried, and I wanted to try.

Even after I was done writing the essay and was lying in bed, I kept thinking about what I could do to make things better for me and my family, for all the Mrs. Henrys, for Juan and for Julio's mother and even for all the Jamals, for the kind of kids who only know how to solve problems with their fists. I kept thinking about what the bus driver said as he was dragging Jamal off the bus, "You got to learn to think right, act right, do right." Those words kept repeating in my head until I fell asleep.



The next day, I handed Mrs. Moore my essay at the end of class. I had lunch right after creative writing, so I asked her if I could talk to her about a plan I had to stop the violence.

"You finished your essay already, Greg? Well," said Mrs. Moore, "you are a great student. I expect great things from you."

"Mrs. Moore," I began tentatively. "I wanted to talk to you about starting a club where students like myself, who don't want to fight could meet and talk about how we feel about violence and what we could do to make this school and our neighborhood safer." Mrs. Moore and I talked for the entire lunch period. I told her everything I had in mind and she added

a few ideas of her own.

I couldn't believe that she was going to help me. We even came up with a name for the club, S.A.V., which stands for Students Against Violence.

The following week, the principal, Mr. Hennesy, called me to his office during P.E. I thought I was in big trouble. As I walked upstairs from the gym, I kept trying to figure out what I could have done wrong. I gave my name to Mrs. George, one of the secretaries at the office, and told her Mr. Hennesy wanted to see me. I turned to sit down but she said, "Go right on in, he's ready to see you now."

"You must be Greg," said Mr. Hennesy as I walked into his office. "Sit down, sit down." To my surprise, Mrs. Moore was also there. They were both smiling at me, so I relaxed a little. Sitting down I managed to



stammer, “Ah, h-h-hello, sir.” Mr. Hennessy smiled again.

“No need to be nervous Greg, you’re not in any trouble. Mrs. Moore was so impressed with your essay and ideas for a club for students against violence that she shared both your essay and ideas with me.” After a short pause, Mr. Hennessy continued, “I’m very impressed with your writing ability and your compassion for others. I’d like us to work together to make this club a reality.”

I knew that the conversation was real, but I still couldn’t believe what I was hearing. I think I forgot to breathe. I realized that Mr. Hennessy was still talking, so I forced myself to focus on what

he was saying.

“Now Greg, I want you to choose five other students who exhibit the same leadership qualities that you have.”

At this point, I interrupted, “Leadership qualities, sir? I’m not a leader.”

“Yes, you are Greg. You are not only a leader you’re a positive one. You have all the qualities of every positive leader who has gone before you and will come after you. You have initiative, compassion, respect, and you are not afraid to share your positive influence with others.”

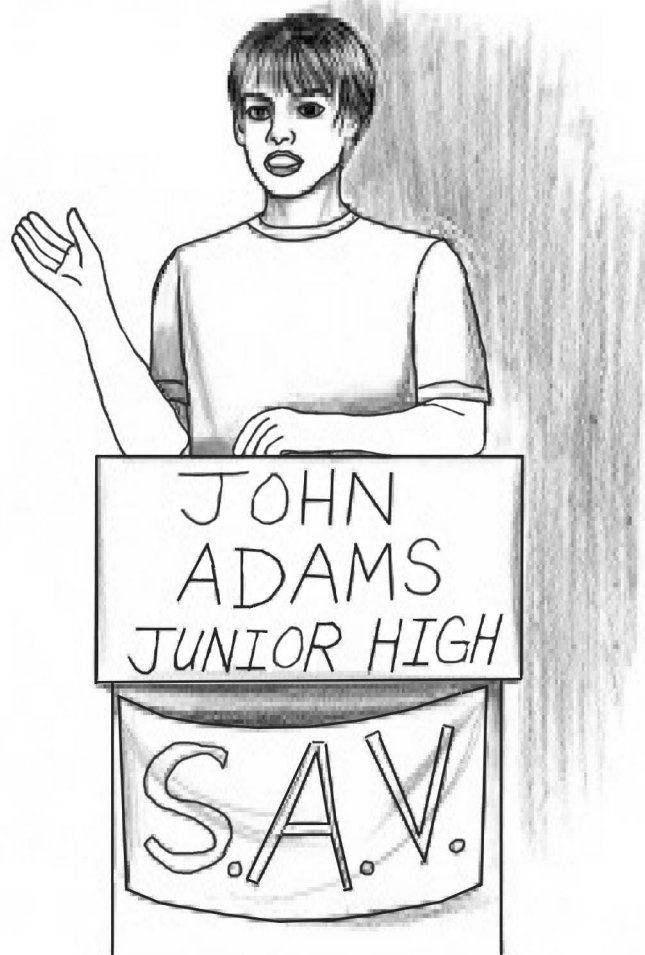
I grinned from ear to ear. I couldn’t wait to share the news with my family. And I already knew the five people I would pick to help me. Juan, Colin, LeMarvis, Scot, and Kasha. They were in my homeroom and like me, they were tired of seeing kids get beat up, tired of being picked on, and tired of having to stay in after school because of the gang wars and drive-bys.

Mr. Hennessy, Mrs. Moore and I made additional plans. My five friends and I would meet after school with Mrs. Moore in order to structure the club rules and activities. We talked about the need for character education and anger management. Mr. Hennessy said that he also wanted to start a peer mediation program. Of course, I didn’t know what that meant, so he explained. He said that he wanted to teach students how to settle conflicts peacefully so that they can teach other students. We also talked about having a stop-the-violence poster contest in order to make our community aware of what we were trying to do.

It’s been six months since I had that meeting with Mr. Hennessy and Mrs. Moore. S.A.V now has 85 members. We have raised public

awareness about violence in schools, and soon there will be mandatory character education classes for all grades. The *Portland Express* heard about the club and how it was making a difference in John Adams Junior High. They came to our school and interviewed us. They were excited to learn that by teaching anger management and tolerance, the percentage of fights at school were significantly reduced.

Then the Mayor heard about us and set up an open forum with community leaders to talk about violence and its effects on students. My mom, dad and little sister came, and I got to read my essay, the essay I wrote the night Juan and Jamal got into that fight, the essay that started it all. As I read my essay, I looked at my mom. She was sitting in the front row and tears were rolling down her face. This time I was glad to see a grown-up cry.



## Answer The Following Questions

1. What are three ways violence affected Greg and his family?

They didn't like where they lived.

They didn't feel safe there anymore.

They saw a lot of violence.

2. Why did Greg want to stop the violence?

Greg wanted to stop the violence because it hurt him to see others harmed.

He knew it wasn't a safe, peaceful way to solve problems.

3. What leadership qualities did Greg have?

Greg had the leadership qualities of initiative, compassion, respect and he was not afraid to share his positive influences with others.

4. What were some of the positive effects S.A.V. had on John Adams Junior High and the community?

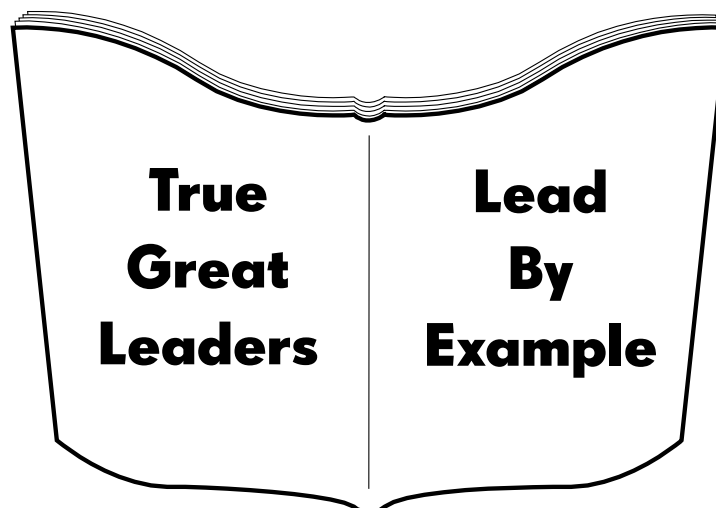
There were fewer fights at school. There were mandatory character education classes for the school.

5. Why do you think Greg's mother was crying while Greg was reading his essay?

Greg's mother was crying as he read his essay because she respected her son's ability to stand up for what is right and help make a difference in his school and community.

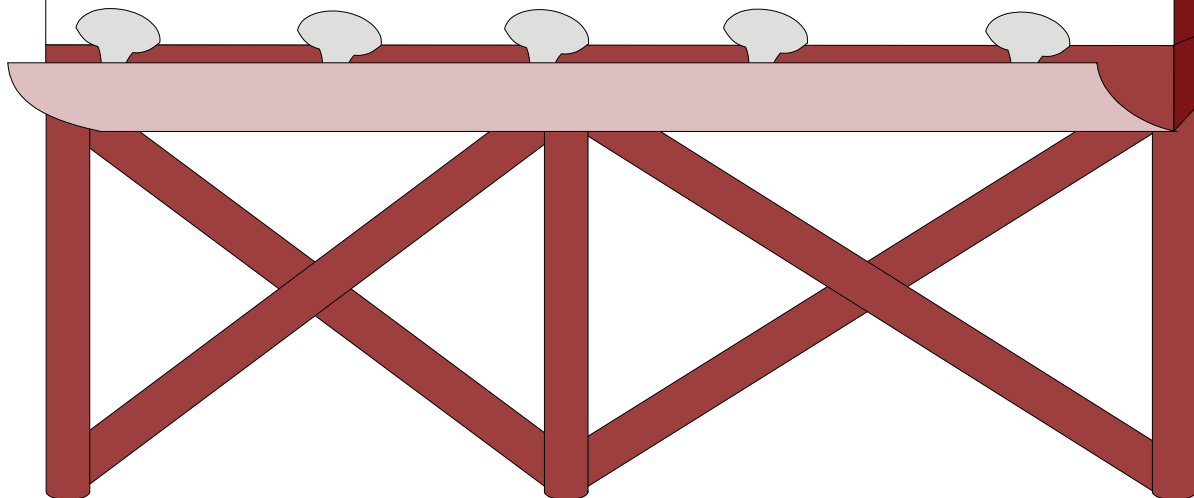
## What I Have Learned

- ☑ Leaders are an important part of our society and that the basis and quality of leadership starts and ends with moral character.
- ☑ Negative leaders can help to bring about hatred and violence.
- ☑ On the other hand, positive moral leaders motivate and encourage others to do their best and to achieve positive goals without unfairly taking from or harming someone else.
- ☑ Everyone is capable of learning how to lead. A potential leader is first willing to be trained.
- ☑ Learning to be a positive leader can be achieved by combining my positive character traits with personality and skills.
- ☑ The goal of being a leader is not to boss people around or always be in charge, rather leadership is a way to serve others and will help me maintain my positive character and help me gain the courage and skills to make a difference in my life and the world around me.
- ☑ My future and my safety are too important to wait for others to make a difference.
- ☑ I don't have to be an adult to be a leader. I can begin leading others now by encouraging them to obtain a positive character and to respect others through my example.



## Enrichment Activities

1. There are many examples of leaders who demonstrated positive or negative character traits. Research the life-style of some of these leaders or find news articles showing their accomplishments or failures. Use information for class discussion.
2. Group work: Students should be assigned to work on class projects. Each individual should be given the opportunity to be the leader. Other members of the group are to evaluate each leader using the list of qualities of an effective leader on **pages 131-132**.
3. A community leader should speak to the class about effective leadership skills and some of the responsibilities of being a leader.
4. Do **“Just For Fun”** activity on **page 145**.



# Just For Fun

Decode each word. Using the decoder below, replace each small letter in the scrambled word with the capital letter above it.



A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
w	q	a	s	p	k	j	t	l	x	v	b	f	o	d	c	n	u	e	r	z	h	m	i	g	y

1. adoelerporbg consistently
2. bpwspuetlc leadership
3. lorpjulrg integrity
4. upecdoelqblrg responsibility
5. cpuedowblrg personality
6. odoatwbwor nonchalant
7. slkkpupoap difference
8. nzwblrlpe qualities
9. jdwbe goals
10. fdrlhwrp motivate
11. upecparkzb respectful
12. poadzuwjp encourage





# Chapter Seven

## All That I Have Learned

### Note To The Teacher

**W**e live in a goal oriented society where children are taught from an early age to have some perception of what they want to be when they enter into the adult world. The more prestigious the future occupation, the more we, as adults, look forward to that outcome. Parents share and give much support when their son or daughter wants to be a doctor, fireman or president one day. But how often do we impress upon our children the need to make moral character as much a part of their future as a prestigious career?

In this final chapter, students will gain an appreciation of the importance of maintaining moral character in order to have a successful future, and how to maintain a positive character in order to avoid risk-taking behaviors and their negative consequences.

As role models and educators, we have an awesome opportunity to play an integral role in the shaping and molding of tomorrow's parents and leaders. *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program* hopes to instill within the mind of each and every child that the single most important goal they can achieve now and in the future is to develop and maintain a positive, moral character that will not only benefit their lifetime but that of future generations to come.



# Lesson Plan

## All That I Have Learned

### PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

Students will learn that preparation for adulthood begins with developing a positive moral character.

### MATERIALS

- *Teacher's Manual Audio Lessons* cassette
- Cassette player
- Several tennis balls
- Masking tape
- Red permanent marker
- Students' handbook

### PROCEDURE

1. Inform students that this chapter will complete the unit on Character from *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*. Explain to students that character is an essential part of who they are and how they identify with others. Reemphasize that character should not be confused with personality. Guide class feedback by asking the following questions:

- a. What is the difference between character and personality? (*Character helps a person determine right from wrong. Personality reflects your likes, dislikes, how you present yourself to others.*)
- b. What effects does family have on the development of your character? (*A person can be easily influenced by the values that his family share, whether they are positive or negative.*)
- c. How are values important in obtaining a positive, moral character? (*True values will assist us in developing positive character traits.*)
- d. What does it mean to set your mind in advance to maintain your character? (*To consider how important it is to have positive character and not deter from it. If you make a mistake, learn from it and don't make it again. Do not be influenced to do anything that will compromise your character.*)

e. Give examples of ways in which negative and positive character can ripple outward from the individual and affect society? (*Negative: violence breeding more violence; positive: acts of kindness passed on.*)

f. How can learning to be a true, effective leader help you to maintain a positive, moral character? (*It can help get yourself and others out of a bad situation. It can motivate you to take initiative and have courage to stand up for what is right. You may even encourage others to make a right choice.*)

2. Explain to students that the focus today will be how maintaining or not maintaining a positive moral character can affect their futures. Have students turn to **page 147** in their handbooks and read, **“Introduction.”** Emphasize to students that they are not too young to begin to consider what they desire their futures to be like and what they must do to prepare for them.

3. Ask students how many of them have ever been on a trip where things did not go as expected, for example, a flat tire, bad weather, or maybe they got lost. Have students share some of their experiences with the class. Explain that life can be compared to a journey and just as if they were going on an actual trip; they must be prepared for unexpected obstacles and various influences. Have students turn to **page 148** in their handbooks and read the section entitled, **“You’ve Only Just Begun.”**

4. Continue with the analogy of life being a journey. Ask students, “If you were told that you had to pack everything you would need for the rest of your lives into a suitcase, what would you pack?” Allow as many answers as time permits. Have students turn to **page 149** in their handbooks and read the section entitled, **“Let’s Take A Trip.”** Emphasize that having a positive, moral character is the first step in preparing themselves for their journey to adulthood.

5. Explain to students that in addition to their positive moral character, learning to choose their friends wisely is another important aspect of growing up. Have students turn to **pages 150-152** in their handbooks and read the section entitled, **“Friends Along The Way”** in order to complete the exercise on choosing friends. Guide class feedback by asking students the following questions.

- a. Which three friends did they choose and why?
- b. How will their choices help them to maintain a positive character?

6. Ask students to share what they think society will be like ten years from now. Allow as many answers as time permits, and prompt students to be creative with their predictions. Have students turn to **pages 155-156** in their handbooks and read the section entitled, **“The Journey Continues.”** Allow students to listen to the narrative entitled, **“Life Changes”** found on **pages 157-158** of their handbook and answer the questions on **page 159**.

7. Dream Interrupted: This activity was developed to help students experience how a negative character can affect their hopes, dreams and ambitions. Prior to this activity, cut masking tape into two to three inch strips and adhere one strip to each tennis ball. Using a red permanent marker, write on each piece of masking tape a consequence of having a negative character or engaging in a risky behavior. For example, “Caught Shoplifting,” “Was Dishonest on a College Application,” “Got Involved In Drugs,” “Was Arrested for Drinking and Driving” and so on. **Note:** *Behaviors resulting in sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy or rape should be done in a single-sex setting in order to avoid embarrassing students.*

a. Have students turn to **page 160** in their handbooks to the activity entitled, **“Time Machine.”** They are to write a short essay based on the instructions in their handbooks. Upon completion allow students to come to the front of the class to read their essays. After they have read their essays, toss them one of the pre-marked tennis balls explaining that the ball represents an event that could occur if they do not maintain their positive character.

b. Have students briefly discuss how that event could change their future plans and dreams. Allow as many students as time permits to take part in this activity. It is a powerful deterrent to negative behaviors.

8. Conclude the lesson by encouraging students to turn to **page 161** in their handbooks and read the section entitled, **“What I Have Learned.”** Urge students in making, developing and maintaining a positive, moral character, the most important thing in their lives. Stress that by so doing they will achieve great success now and in the future and will positively affect the lives of many others.

*Unit One*

*“A moral character is not only the solution, it is our obligation.”  
~ The Peaceful Solution*

# Chapter Seven

## All That I Have Learned

### Introduction

**L**et’s face it, there are some subjects that you will take before you have completed your education that you may never use again. Character Education, on the other hand, is something that you will need everyday of your life and in every interaction with any person you will ever meet. True positive character is the one thing that you must maintain even when you are by yourself and no one is looking.

You now know that your values and influences are the foundation for your character. What you deem as important and what you allow yourself to be influenced by will determine what choices you make. The fact is, when you maintain a positive character, you will avoid making choices that will leave you with regrets. A negative character and poor choices lead to serious consequences that can have life long effects.

So don’t drop your guard, not even for a moment. Visualize that your positive character is like a shield, protecting you from choices that could seriously hinder you from a bright and successful future.



# YOU'VE ONLY JUST BEGUN

**Y**ou just can't wait to be a teenager. Finally some independence, a little freedom, you might even get to make a few decisions on your own. The teen years are something everyone looks forward to, because they mark the beginning of the journey to adulthood and, although it may seem that you are ready to be an adult, the truth is you have only just begun. You have only just begun to live, to experience life, and to gain the insight and wisdom needed to become a productive member of society.

As with all journeys, preparation is the key. Have you ever been on a trip and encountered car trouble, an unexpected detour, or bad weather? Did you get lost and have to ask for directions? If you had a flat tire, were the tools available to change it? Were you prepared?

The time span between childhood and adulthood can be compared to a journey, and just like a road trip, things may not go exactly as you planned. Keep in mind that there will be detours or bad weather—those unexpected events that will really test your resolve to maintain your positive character. Just as if you were on a road trip, being prepared means that you can successfully complete your journey even if there are obstacles that you did not expect.



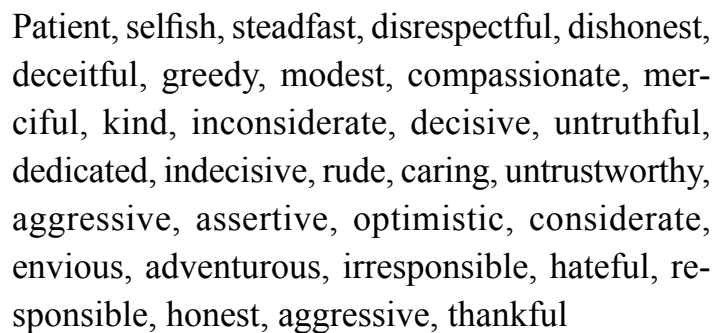
# LET'S TAKE A TRIP

*If life was one long road trip, what would you take,  
and who would you take with you?*

**I**magine that you have to pack a suitcase with everything you will need for the rest of your life. What are some of the physical things you would need? Surely you would need food, water, clothes, shoes and money. But those are just the physical things. In addition to this, you will also need to provide for your emotional needs, because everybody needs to know that they are loved, cared for and accepted. Therefore, you will also need to pack your family, friends and values in this suitcase. If you're thinking that there is no way you can possibly fit all of this into a suitcase, guess what, you're not finished yet.

What else will you need to help you on your journey of life? Believe it or not, the most important thing you can pack for your journey is a **positive moral character**. As you will see later on in this chapter, without positive moral character, you can make choices that could cost you everything you value, as well as bring harm to others. Choices that can seem harmless at the time can turn out to alter your life, change the outcome of your future and compromise your potential. So, the first things you must put into your suitcase for your journey are your positive moral character traits.

**Carefully consider the following character traits. Circle only the ones that you will want to take with you on your journey.**



Patient, selfish, steadfast, disrespectful, dishonest, deceitful, greedy, modest, compassionate, merciful, kind, inconsiderate, decisive, untruthful, dedicated, indecisive, rude, caring, untrustworthy, aggressive, assertive, optimistic, considerate, envious, adventurous, irresponsible, hateful, responsible, honest, aggressive, thankful

## Friends Along The Way

**A**long with your moral character, the next most important things you can take on your journey are friends who will support you and encourage you to maintain your positive moral character.

It is a known fact that the older you get the more you will identify with your friends. Everyone needs to feel accepted and that they belong. Having friends is an important part of that process. Who you associate with and call your friends say a lot about your character. Because friends can exert the greatest amount of influence on each other, it is very important that you choose friends based on their character and not just their personality. Having friends, people to share your ups and downs with, to laugh with and to cry with, helps to make life complete.

**Read the description of the following people and then decide, based on the description, what some of their character traits are. Would you take that person on your trip? Explain why or why not.**

### Lin Yu

Lin Yu is the captain of the cheerleading team. She is very outgoing and fun to be around. She is always the first one to volunteer to help with school events. Everyday after school, she picks up her sister from the Elementary School down the block and walks her home. Last week, when Mrs. Pole forgot her wallet in the school cafeteria, Lin Yu found it and turned it into lost and found. Mitch told her to open it, but Lin Yu said that would be invading the privacy of whomever the wallet belonged to. The other day a bunch of her friends asked her to go to the movies, but Lin Yu said she couldn't make it because she had to study for midterms.

- What are some of Lin Yu's character traits? \_\_\_\_\_

*Lin Yu was responsible, honest, respectable and steadfast.*

- Would you take Lin Yu on your trip? Explain why or why not.

*Positive character traits.*

## Scott

You have known Scott for most of your life. You have been in the same classes since kindergarten. Scott has a great sense of humor and whenever he is around, he would have everybody laughing. He often makes racist jokes and could imitate anybody, from the teachers to his classmates. He really likes imitating Henry who is in special education classes and walks with a limp. He is always picking up someone's things and teasing that he will keep them, then eventually he gives them back. Yesterday, Scott agreed to meet at your house to finish a project you were working on. You waited and waited, but he never showed up. The next day, you asked Scott why he didn't come over, and he said that he started watching a movie and lost track of time. Then he blamed you for not calling and reminding him.

- What are some of Scott's character traits? \_\_\_\_\_  
*Scott was disrespectful, unreliable and irresponsible.*

- Would you take Scott on your trip? Explain why or why not.  
*Negative character traits.*

## Beverly

Beverly is soft-spoken and loves art. She tries hard in school and does well on all of her subjects. When she is frustrated, she always remains calm and level headed. Yesterday in class, Mr. Frank thought she was the one talking, so he gave her five demerits, but Beverly didn't get upset. I asked her why she didn't just tell Mr. Frank that she wasn't the one talking, and she said that arguing wasn't going to help.

- What are some of Beverly's character traits? \_\_\_\_\_  
*Beverly was patient, maintained self-control and respectful.*

- Would you take Beverly on your trip? Explain why or why not.  
*Positive character traits.*

## Tim

Tim is a very serious guy. He rarely laughs. He says that most things just don't seem funny to him. The other day when Scott was making fun of Henry, Tim told the group that it wasn't Henry's fault that he walked with a limp, and that if they wanted something funny to laugh at, they should rent a comedy. Then he walked off and sat down to eat his lunch. He asks permission every time he needs to touch or borrow something from someone else and he returns it in great condition. When Billy asked Tim to help him cheat on the social studies exam, Tim told him "no." Billy didn't talk to Tim for a week, but Tim didn't seem to mind.

- What are some of Tim's character traits? \_\_\_\_\_  
Tim was respectful and courageous.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Would you take Tim on your trip? Explain why or why not.  
Positive character traits.  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Peggy

If things didn't go exactly as Peggy wanted, she would get pretty "ticked-off," and she made sure everybody knew it. You always had to be careful around Peggy, because if you said something she didn't like, she would literally get in your face and tell you off. A couple of weeks ago, Peggy thought that Karen was talking about her, so Peggy pushed Karen against the wall and yelled at her. Karen was scared, but she tried not to show it. The guidance counselor heard about what had occurred, and Peggy got into big trouble. The next day Peggy apologized to Karen, but everybody knew she only apologized because the guidance counselor told her to.

- What are some of Peggy's character traits? \_\_\_\_\_  
Peggy was disrespectful.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Would you take Peggy on your trip? Explain why or why not.  
Negative character traits.  
\_\_\_\_\_

Maintaining a positive moral character and choosing friends that are also positive are important parts of growing up. From time to time, remember to evaluate the things that are important to you and your friends. Friendships may start off positive, but if one or more of your friends neglect to guard their positive character and are influenced to do something that could cause harm, then you must be ready to be a leader and stand for what you know is right. Tell them that what they are doing is wrong. Point out the consequences of their actions. Remind them that their future is ahead of them, whether they will listen to what you say at that time or not. Do not take part in their weaknesses. Do not just go along with whatever your friends are doing just because they are your friends. You are already aware of how a lack of self-control can cause harm to you and others. You must be determined to change those behaviors that do not promote true positive character and not give into negative influences. Keep in mind that courage, determination and compassion for others are only a few of the positive character traits that you will need for your journey, a journey that will include your friends, so be prepared.

**Read the following article about friends who made a choice that will cost them their futures.**

### **They Will Face Adult Charges**

Five youths linked to the burning of Wylie Junior High have been indicted for arson as well as organized criminal activity. In addition to the High School, they have also been linked to several other fires. The three 16-year-olds in the group have had their case transferred to adult court. If convicted on all counts, the boys could face from 5 to 99 years in prison.

<http://www.ktxs.com/newsroom/>

# HERE IS A BRIGHT IDEA!!



**Dare to be different.  
You could save your future  
and someone else's.**

# The Journey Continues

**D**o you already have some idea about what you want to accomplish in life and how you want to continue gaining knowledge in developing moral character? Based on the information you have learned in this unit of *The Peaceful Solution Character Education Program*, you should now be motivated to make an effort to change the world and make it a better place to live, not only for your generation but for future ones as well.

You have been given all the skills necessary for success. Positive moral character traits have been clearly defined for you. The need to guard yourself and others from negative influences which lead to negative character is crucial throughout the rest of your life.

As you apply these moral principles to your every day routine, you will find that they become a habit. Others will notice a difference in your behavior and will be motivated to make positive choices that build moral character. You really can have an impact, not only on your future, but also the future of those around you. Don't take these character tools for granted. Use them. These are the tools you will need for a successful life.

Apply moral character traits, such as honesty, steadfastness,

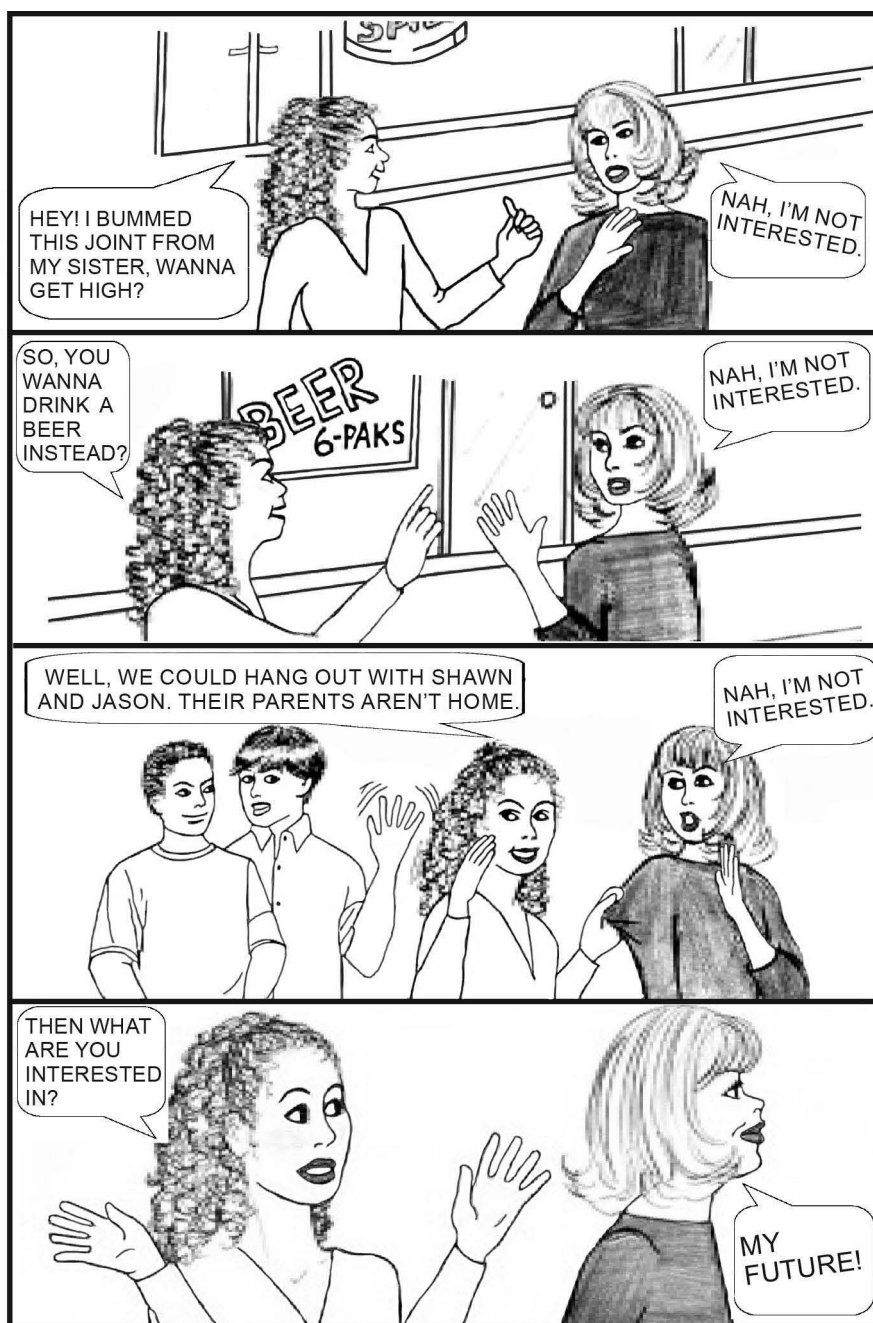


impartial justice, courage, respect, patience and self-control to succeed and achieve positive goals for yourself. Resist the urge to give in to any risky behavior that could undermine all your efforts to develop your full potential.

Remember that those who choose to develop negative character likely won't achieve their dreams. Moreover, they will bring hardship to their lives and to others. Life becomes a gamble for them. Think about it, those who are dishonest, cheat and steal. Eventually, they get caught and suffer the consequences. Their whole lives can be ruined by one

single negative act. Developing negative character by allowing your mind to become influenced leads to risky behaviors, such as drug abuse, consumption of alcohol, dangerous driving practices and unhealthy relationships. This can then cause one to do something he may regret for the rest of his life.

Some mistakes or errors in judgment you may recover from, but some can stay with you for life. Focus on building and maintaining moral character every day. This is the only way you can ensure that you will have a bright and positive future.





**Maintaining a positive character was important to both Davy and Todd. They both had big dreams until summer break when life changed for both boys. Listen to the following narrative to find out what occurred to these two best friends.**

## **Narrative: Life Changes**

Davy and Todd used to be best friends when they were in Junior High School. They did well in their studies, were very active in school events and both wanted to be newscasters. But their friendship changed during the summer break before they entered the eighth grade. A new family moved next door to Davy. Davy started hanging out with one of the new boys, and within a few weeks Todd noticed that his friend started drinking and smoking. Suddenly the things that used to matter to Davy didn't matter anymore. He no longer liked going over to Todd's house to talk or swim in the backyard pool. In fact by the middle of the summer, Davy acted like he didn't know Todd at all.

Todd tried to talk to Davy several times about their friendship and about his choice to drink and smoke; but, Davy would just tell him to mind his own business. Not knowing what else to do to help his friend, Todd tried to talk to Davy's parents, but they were having problems with Davy's older sister and just didn't know what to do with Davy. Reluctantly, Todd decided that he had done all he could for his friend.

The summer ended, and Davy was still drinking and smoking. All through the eighth grade, Todd watched his friend from a distance and wondered why Davy had changed. Todd on the other hand, continued to do well in school. He graduated Valedictorian and went on to High School. He made new friends but never forgot Davy. All through high school Todd maintained his positive character and avoided negative influences and risky behaviors. He excelled in his studies and earned a scholarship for college. With determination and hard work, Todd graduated with a degree in journalism and fulfilled his dream of becoming a newscaster on a major news show.

Davy, on the other hand, spent most of his last year in Junior High either in the principal's office, in detention, or hiding behind his garage getting drunk and high. He barely passed the eighth grade, and dropped out of High School after the first year. With his life falling apart, Davy turned to crime. He stole a woman's purse out of her cart at the grocery store and was arrested twice for shoplifting cigarettes from a convenience store.

Around the same time Todd was starting his new job as a newscaster, Davy began to consider the poor choices he had made. Now in his mid-twenties, Davy was unable to keep a job. His drinking eventually got him fired. Sometimes he would think about Todd and wonder how he was doing. It took a long time for Davy to realize that Todd had been the best friend he ever had. His other friends, the ones he started drinking and smoking with, had ended up in jail and rehabilitation centers.

One night, as Davy watched the evening news, he saw Todd doing the job they had both dreamed of as children. Davy knew what he had to do. Within only a few days, Davy got in touch with Todd. Todd was surprised to hear from Davy and even more surprised to hear what he had to say. Davy told Todd that he was the best friend he had ever had, and he was sorry he hadn't listened when he tried to help.

Davy also expressed that he wanted to change his life but didn't know how. Todd said he would be glad to help Davy get back on his feet. It took several months; but, with Todd's help and encouragement, Davy was able to overcome his addiction to alcohol and got his G.E.D. He then enrolled at the local college and took night classes until he earned his degree. With diligence and determination Davy regained his self-respect and eventually became an editor for the local newspaper.

Thinking back on the years he wasted and all the wrong choices he made, Davy knew that he couldn't change his past; but, he also knew that by maintaining a positive character and sharing his life story he could influence someone else not to make the same mistakes. Davy and Todd remained friends, supporting and encouraging each other to maintain a positive character and to have bright and successful futures.

### Answer The Following Questions

1. Did Davy protect his positive character? Explain your answer.

No. He didn't apply enough determination but became influenced negatively.

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2. How did Davy's choice affect his life's dream? \_\_\_\_\_

Because of negative behaviors such as alcoholism, etc., his life fell apart.

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3. Did Todd possess any leadership skills? List some. Yes.

Steadfast, compassionate, responsible

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4. How did Todd's positive character keep him from being negatively influenced, and how was he able to help Davy? \_\_\_\_\_

Todd was persistent in maintaining his positive character which enabled him to lead a successful life and be supportive to Davy when he needed help.

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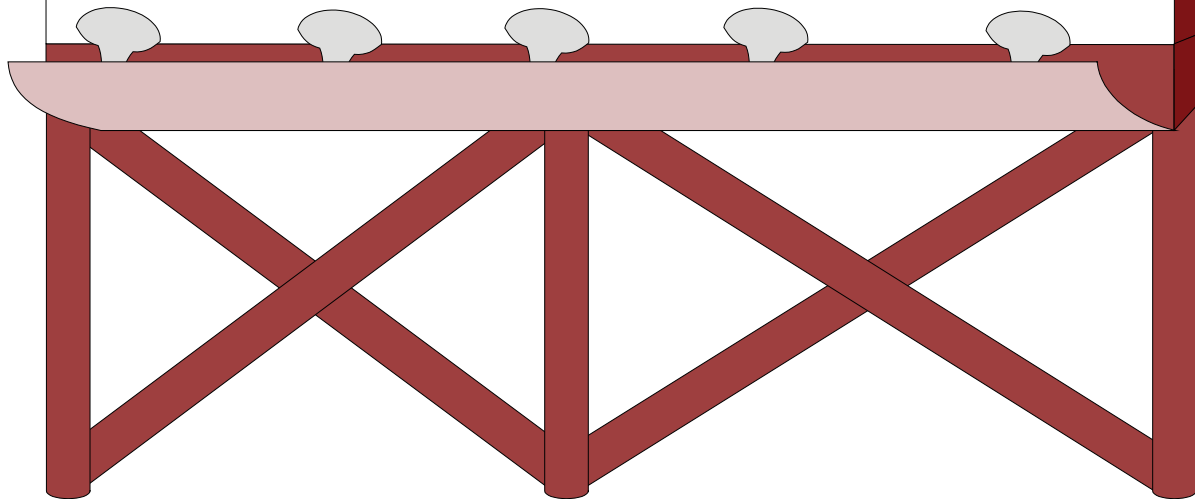


## What I Have Learned

- ☑ Character is very different from personality. Character is the sum total of my values and experiences which helps me to distinguish what is right from wrong.
- ☑ When I behave in a manner that demonstrates care and concern for myself and others, I am displaying my positive moral character traits.
- ☑ Although personality can be mistaken for character, it is different in that personality enables me to be unique. It is a combination of my likes and dislikes, attitudes, and preferences.
- ☑ Even though two people may have similar personalities, they could have very different characters.
- ☑ It is very important that I evaluate my friends based not only on our similar personality traits but also on character.
- ☑ The foundation for my character began even before I was born. Through the combination of my parent's genes, I inherited specific behavioral patterns.
- ☑ Behavioral patterns, unlike physical traits, can be developed based upon the environment.
- ☑ Being in the environment of a healthy family gives me the security, safety, love and encouragement that I need to develop my positive character.
- ☑ Family, environment, experiences and influences have molded me into the person I am today.
- ☑ The commitment to develop and maintain a positive character must be done on a daily basis, and it is the first step in preparing myself for the future.
- ☑ Developing and maintaining a positive character must be the focus of all my interactions, activities and endeavors.
- ☑ If everyone, individually and collectively, focused on developing a positive moral character, the ripple effect would produce a world that had no crime, no hatred, no violence and no wars.

## Enrichment Activities

1. Plan for a school sponsored mini-career day. Invite local business owners to talk about maintaining a positive character to succeed in careers.
2. Do “**Just For Fun**” activities on pages 163-165.



# Just For Fun

## Activity #1

Find the hidden words.



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

COMPASSIONATE	GENEROUS	OPTIMISTIC	RESPONSIBLE
COURAGEOUS	HONEST	PATIENT	STEADFAST
DISCIPLINED	HUMBLE	RELIABLE	THANKFUL
FORGIVING	MERCIFUL	RESPECTFUL	TRUSTWORTHY

# Just For Fun Activity #2

Unscramble each word and write it on the line.



- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. ykisir _____ <i>risky</i>            | 11. seenosnuecqc _____ <i>consequences</i> |
| 2. ccfeslusus _____ <i>successful</i>   | 12. alhnsatin _____ <i>inhalants</i>       |
| 3. ippetaoranr _____ <i>preparation</i> | 13. sseseiad _____ <i>diseases</i>         |
| 4. uinenlcf _____ <i>influence</i>      | 14. yjnroeu _____ <i>journey</i>           |
| 5. revohaib _____ <i>behavior</i>       | 15. dgurs _____ <i>drugs</i>               |
| 6. noitbsroa _____ <i>abortions</i>     | 16. pceeerxnei _____ <i>experience</i>     |
| 7. lcloah _____ <i>alcohol</i>          | 17. ureuft _____ <i>future</i>             |
| 8. neeraget _____ <i>teenager</i>       | 18. eveorcr _____ <i>recover</i>           |
| 9. nfirdse _____ <i>friends</i>         | 19. iinatamn _____ <i>maintain</i>         |
| 10. tohdudlao _____ <i>adulthood</i>    |  |

abortions	diseases	influence	recover
adulthood	drugs	inhalants	risky
alcohol	experience	journey	successful
behavior	friends	maintain	teenager
consequences	future	preparation	



# Just For Fun Activity #3

Find the hidden words.



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

- |           |              |             |            |
|-----------|--------------|-------------|------------|
| drugs     | behavior     | journey     | adulthood  |
| alcohol   | consequences | diseases    | inhalants  |
| risky     | future       | friends     | influence  |
| abortions | teenager     | recover     | successful |
| maintain  | experience   | preparation |            |



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# Glossary

Definitions taken from *The American Heritage Dictionary*.

**Accentuate**—To stress or emphasize; intensify.

**Affirmation**—Something declared to be true; a positive statement or judgment.

**Beneficial**—Producing or promoting a [positive] result; advantageous.

**Commitment**—A pledge to do.

**Community**—A group of people living in the same locality and under the same government.

**Consequences**—Something that logically or naturally follows from an action or condition.

**Conscientious**—Influenced by one’s conscience; made in agreement with the opinions of the conscience.

**Culture**—The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought.

**Desensitize**—To render insensitive or less sensitive. To make emotionally insensitive or unresponsive, as by long exposure or repeated shocks.

**Determination**—The act of making or arriving at a decision. Firmness of purpose; resolve. A fixed intention or resolution.

**Develop**—To expand or enlarge. To aid in the growth of; strengthen. To improve the quality of; refine.

**Distinguish**—To perceive as being different or distinct. To make noticeable or different; set apart. To cause (oneself) to be eminent or recognized.

**Dysfunctional**—Abnormal or impaired functioning.

**Environment**—The circumstances or conditions that surround one; surroundings.

**Exhibit**—To show outwardly; display. To present for others to see. To give evidence or an instance of; demonstrate.

**Genetics**—The branch of biology that deals with heredity, especially the mechanisms of hereditary transmission and the variation of inherited characteristics among similar or related organisms. The genetic constitution of an individual, a group, or a class.

**Hypothetical**—Of, relating to, or based on a hypothesis: *a hypothetical situation*. Suppositional; uncertain.

**Influences**—Power to sway or affect based on prestige, wealth, ability, or position. To affect the nature, development, or condition of; modify.

**Inherit**—To receive (property or a title, for example) from an ancestor by legal succession or will. To receive (a characteristic) from one's parents by genetic transmission.

**Integrity**—Steadfast adherence to a strict moral or ethical code.

**Interact**—To act on each other.

**Modesty**—Reserve or propriety in speech, dress, or behavior.

**Morals**—Of or concerned with the judgment of the human action and character. Conforming to standards of what is right or just in behavior; virtuous.

**Negative**—Expressing, containing, or consisting of a negation, refusal, or denial. Indicating opposition or resistance.

**Negligent**—Characterized by or inclined to neglect, especially habitually. Characterized by careless ease or informality; casual.

**Nonchalant**—Seeming to be coolly unconcerned or indifferent.

**Peer pressure**—

**Peer**— A person who has equal standing with another or others, as in rank, class, or age: *children who are easily influenced by their peers*.

**Pressure**—The application of continuous force by one body on another that it is touching; compression.

**Positive**—Characterized by or displaying certainty, acceptance, or affirmation. Very sure; confident.

**Potential**—Having possibility, capability, or power.

**Precaution**—An action taken in advance to protect against possible danger or failure; a safeguard.

**Reputation**—A specific characteristic or trait ascribed to a person or thing.

## **Remember This!**

Basing your decisions on facts, not emotions, is what builds true, moral character. You are better able to make a perfect decision when you gather all the facts than a person who only has a portion of the facts.

# 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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