Character Development

The process of demonstrating integrity, honesty and moral behavior to build a respectable life.

Making good choices develops good character. Your conduct represents your choice and is proof of your character.

Developing character requires a commitment to represent good values in every area; at home, school, and in your community. Have a quick think about how you can demonstrate character. Do you need to improve? Think about how you can be more intentional and proactive. Review the Character Traits below. Add additional thoughts to each trait to extend the definition; make it applicable to your life. How can you implement each trait in your day?

Trait #1: **Integrity** - Stand up for your beliefs about right and wrong; be your best self; resist social pressure to do wrong.

Trait #2: **Honesty** - Tell the truth; be sincere; don’t mislead or withhold key information in relationships of trust; don’t steal.

Trait #3: **Be Loyal** - Stand by family, friends, community and country; don’t talk about people behind their backs.

Trait #4: **Be responsible** - Think before you act; consider consequences; be accountable.

Trait #5: **Kind and caring** - Show others that you care through generosity and compassion. Be empathetic and don’t be selfish and mean.

Trait #6: **Be respectful** - Be courteous, polite, and fair. Judge all people on individual merits. Accept individual differences as well as offering tolerance and appreciation.

Trait #7: **Be a good citizen** - Obey the law and respect authority.

Trait #8: **Persevere** - Do your best and don’t be afraid to take risks; don’t quit easily.

In which area do I execute the most Character?

Having good character is internally desiring to demonstrate the traits in every area of your life. The traits are essential life tools for success! Being able to determine good traits from bad traits is the key to growth. Below are quadrants for each area in your life. Fill in examples of how good character can be demonstrated. All traits can be used in each area, but there are opportunities where specific traits will be warranted (i.e. not plagiarizing on a research paper in school).
How do you build character? Make it a habit!

To make something a habit, it requires practice. You practice it until it becomes instinctive; you have to focus on it and make it a daily goal. With any sport we aspire to be great in, we train daily. We do drills over and over until we have mastered it. In tennis, if you want a great serve, you first learn the technique and then practice it every day for hours. Building character is the same way. We should practice the keys to good character until it becomes an automatic behavior.

Some character building tips:

Building character is a process that involves constant dedication to growth and maturity. Start building it today! You can always reset and start again. If you need to reset and start again, do so immediately; let your setback serve as a motivator. Consistent good character will create a habit and leave a lasting imprint of who you are.

Surround yourself with people of good character. Association brings about assimilation. Identify people in your life that you respect and people you think exhibit desirable traits. Remember, bad company corrupts good character and good character influences more good character.

Take on difficult challenges and commit to doing them the right way. Do not challenge yourself to get “good grades,” challenge yourself to do your best.

Avoid idle time. Stay busy! Have a “doers” attitude. Don’t just talk about it, be about it.

Love yourself! Be proud of who you are and make an effort to continuously change for the better. Reevaluate your actions and pride yourself in changing what you don’t like. Be in control of you. You hold the power to a better you. Make adjustments and own it!

“Character is power.”
Booker T. Washington

“Character is doing the right thing when nobody’s looking.”

J.C. Watts

“Good character is more to be praised than outstanding talent. Most talents are, to some extent, a gift. Good character, by contrast, is not given to us. We have to build it piece by piece – by thought, choice, courage and determination.”

John Luther