

# A List of The 52 Virtues

Here are the 52 virtues that have inspired the 52 Virtues Project. They are taken from *"The Virtues Project Educator's Guide: Simple Ways to Create a Culture of Character"*

**Assertiveness** Being assertive means being positive and confident. You are aware that you are a worthy person with your own special gifts. You think for yourself and express your own ideas. You know what you stand for and what you won't stand for. You expect respect.

**Caring** Caring is giving love and attention to people and things that matter to you. When you care about people, you help them. You do a careful job, giving your very best effort. You treat people and things gently and respectfully. Caring makes the world a safer place.

**Cleanliness** Cleanliness means washing often, keeping your body clean, and wearing clean clothes. It is putting into your body and your mind only the things that keep you healthy. It is staying free from harmful drugs. It is cleaning up mistakes and making a fresh start.

**Commitment** Commitment is caring deeply about something or someone. It is deciding carefully what you want to do, then giving it 100%, holding nothing back. You give your all to a friendship, a task, or something you believe in. You finish what you start. You keep your promises.

**Compassion** Compassion is understanding and caring when someone is hurt or troubled, even if you don't know them. It is wanting to help, even if all you can do is listen and say kind words. You forgive mistakes. You are a friend when someone needs a friend.

**Confidence** Confidence is having faith in someone. Self-confidence is trusting that you have what it takes to handle whatever happens. You feel sure of yourself and enjoy trying new

things, without letting doubts or fears hold you back. When you have confidence in others, you rely on them.

**Consideration** Consideration is being thoughtful of other people and their feelings. You consider how your actions affect them. You pay careful attention to what others like and don't like, and do things that give them happiness.

**Cooperation** Cooperation is working together and sharing the load. When we cooperate, we join with others to do things that cannot be done alone. We are willing to follow the rules which keep everyone safe and happy. Together we can accomplish great things.

**Courage** Courage is bravery in the face of fear. You do the right thing even when it is hard or scary. When you are courageous, you don't give up. You try new things. You admit mistakes. Courage is the strength in your heart.

**Courtesy** Courtesy is being polite and having good manners. When you speak and act courteously, you give others a feeling of being valued and respected. Greet people pleasantly. Bring courtesy home. Your family needs it most of all. Courtesy helps life to go smoothly.

**Creativity** Creativity is the power of imagination. It is discovering your own special talents. Dare to see things in new ways and find different ways to solve problems. With your creativity, you can bring something new into the world.

**Detachment** Detachment is experiencing your feelings without allowing your feelings to control you. Instead of just reacting, with detachment you are free to choose how you will act. You use thinking and feeling together, so you can make smart choices.

**Determination** You focus your energy and efforts on a task and stick with it until it is finished. Determination is using your will power to do something when it isn't easy. You are determined to meet your goals even when it is hard or you are being tested. With determination we make our dreams come true.

**Diligence** Diligence is working hard and doing your absolute best. You take special care by doing things step by step. Diligence helps you to get things done with excellence and enthusiasm. Diligence leads to success.

**Enthusiasm** Enthusiasm is being cheerful, happy, and full of spirit. It is doing something wholeheartedly and eagerly. When you are enthusiastic, you have a positive attitude. Enthusiasm is being inspired.

**Excellence** Excellence is doing your best, giving careful attention to every task and every relationship. Excellence is effort guided by a noble purpose. It is a desire for perfection. The perfection of a seed comes in the fruit. When you practice excellence, you bring your gifts to fruition. Excellence is the key to success.

**Flexibility** Flexibility is being open to change. You consider others' ideas and feelings and don't insist on your own way. Flexibility gives you creative new ways to get things done. You get rid of bad habits and learn new ones. Flexibility helps you to keep changing for the better.

**Forgiveness** Being forgiving is giving someone another chance after they have done something wrong. Everyone makes mistakes. Instead of revenge, make amends. Forgive yourself too. Instead of feeling hopeless after a mistake, decide to act differently, and have faith that you can change.

**Friendliness** Friendliness is being a friend, through good times and bad. You take an interest in other people and make them feel welcome. You share your belongings, your time and yourself. Friendliness is the best cure for loneliness.

**Generosity** Generosity is giving and sharing. You share freely, not with the idea of receiving something in return. You find ways to give others happiness, and give just for the joy of giving. Generosity is one of the best ways to show love and friendship.

**Gentleness** Gentleness is moving wisely, touching softly, holding carefully, speaking quietly and thinking kindly. When you

feel mad or hurt, use your self-control. Instead of harming someone, talk things out peacefully. You are making the world a safer, gentler place.

**Helpfulness** Helpfulness is being of service to others, doing thoughtful things that make a difference in their lives. Offer your help without waiting to be asked. Ask for help when you need it. When we help each other, we get more done. We make our lives easier.

**Honesty** Honesty is being truthful and sincere. It is important because it builds trust. When people are honest, they can be relied on not to lie, cheat or steal. Being honest means that you accept yourself as you are. When you are open and trustworthy, others can believe in you.

**Honor** Honor is living by the virtues, showing great respect for yourself, other people, and the rules you live by. When you are honorable, you keep your word. You do the right thing regardless of what others are doing. Honor is a path of integrity.

**Humility** Being humble is considering others as important as yourself. You are thoughtful of their needs and willing to be of service. You don't expect others or yourself to be perfect. You learn from your mistakes. When you do great things, humility reminds you to be thankful instead of boastful.

**Idealism** When you have ideals, you really care about what is right and meaningful in life. You follow your beliefs. You don't just accept things the way they are. You make a difference. Idealists dare to have big dreams and then act as if they are possible.

**Integrity** Integrity is living by your highest values. It is being honest and sincere. Integrity helps you to listen to your conscience, to do the right thing, and to tell the truth. You act with integrity when your words and actions match. Integrity gives you self-respect and a peaceful heart.

**Joyfulness** Joyfulness is an inner sense of peace and happiness. You appreciate the gifts each day brings. Without

joyfulness, when the fun stops, our happiness stops. Joy can carry us through the hard times even when we are feeling very sad. Joy gives us wings.

**Justice** Practicing justice is being fair. It is solving problems so everyone wins. You don't prejudge. You see people as individuals. You don't accept it when someone acts like a bully, cheats or lies. Being a champion for justice takes courage. Sometimes when you stand for justice, you stand alone.

**Kindness** Kindness is showing you care, doing some good to make life better for others. Be thoughtful about people's needs. Show love and compassion to someone who is sad or needs your help. When you are tempted to be cruel, to criticize or tease, decide to be kind instead.

**Love** Love is a special feeling that fills your heart. You show love in a smile, a kind word, a thoughtful act or a hug. Love is treating people and things with care and kindness because they mean so much to you. Love is contagious. It keeps spreading.

**Loyalty** Loyalty is staying true to someone. It is standing up for something you believe in without wavering. It is being faithful to your family, country, school, friends or ideals, when the going gets tough as well as when things are good. With loyalty, you build relationships that last forever.

**Moderation** Moderation is creating a healthy balance in your life between work and play, rest and exercise. You don't overdo or get swept away by the things you like. You use your self-discipline to take charge of your life and your time.

**Modesty** Modesty is having self-respect. When you value yourself with quiet pride, you accept praise with humility and gratitude. Modesty is being comfortable with yourself and setting healthy boundaries about your body and your privacy.

**Orderliness** Orderliness is being neat and living with a sense of harmony. You are organized, and you know where things are when you need them. Solve problems step by step instead of going in circles. Order around you creates order inside you. It

gives you peace of mind.

**Patience** Patience is quiet hope and trust that things will turn out right. You wait without complaining. You are tolerant and accepting of difficulties and mistakes. You picture the end in the beginning and persevere to meet your goals. Patience is a commitment to the future.

**Peacefulness** Peacefulness is being calm inside. Take time for daily reflection and gratitude. Solve conflicts so everyone wins. Be a peacemaker. Peace is giving up the love of power for the power of love. Peace in the world begins with peace in your heart.

**Perseverance** Perseverance is being steadfast and persistent. You commit to your goals and overcome obstacles, no matter how long it takes. When you persevere, you don't give up...you keep going. Like a strong ship in a storm, you don't become battered or blown off course. You just ride the waves.

**Purposefulness** Being purposeful is having a clear focus. Begin with a vision for what you want to accomplish, and concentrate on your goals. Do one thing at a time, without scattering your energies. Some people let things happen. When you are purposeful, you make things happen.

**Reliability** Reliability means that others can depend on you. You keep your commitments and give your best to every job. You are responsible. You don't forget, and you don't need to be reminded. Other people can relax knowing things are in your reliable hands.

**Respect** We show respect by speaking and acting with courtesy. We treat others with dignity and honor the rules of our family, school and nation. Respect yourself, and others will respect you.

**Responsibility** Being responsible means others can trust you to do things with excellence. You accept accountability for your actions. When you make a mistake, you offer amends instead of excuses. Responsibility is the ability to respond ably and to make smart choices.

**Self-discipline** Self-discipline means self-control. It is doing what you really want to do, rather than being tossed around by your feelings like a leaf in the wind. You act instead of react. You get things done in an orderly and efficient way. With self-discipline, you take charge of yourself.

**Service** Service is giving to others, making a difference in their lives. You consider their needs as important as your own. Be helpful without waiting to be asked. Do every job with excellence. When you act with a spirit of service, you can change the world.

**Tact** Tact is telling the truth kindly, considerate of how your words affect others' feelings. Think before you speak, knowing what is better left unsaid. When you are tactful, others find it easier to hear what you have to say. Tact builds bridges.

**Thankfulness** Thankfulness is being grateful for what we have. It is an attitude of gratitude for learning, loving and being. Appreciate the little things that happen around you and within you every day. Think positively. Thankfulness brings contentment.

**Tolerance** Being tolerant is accepting differences. You don't expect others to think, look, speak or act just like you. You are free of prejudice, knowing that all people have feelings, needs, hopes and dreams. Tolerance is also accepting things you wish were different with patience and flexibility.

**Trust** Trust is having faith in someone or something. It is a positive attitude about life. You are confident that the right thing will happen without trying to control it or make it happen. Even when difficult things happen, trust helps us to find the gift or lesson in it.

**Trustworthiness** Trustworthiness is being worthy of trust. People can count on you to do your best, to keep your word and to follow through on your commitments. You do what you say you will do. Trustworthiness is a key to success in anything you do.

**Truthfulness** Truthfulness is being honest in your words and

actions. You don't tell lies even to defend yourself. Don't listen to gossip or prejudice. See the truth for yourself. Don't try to be more than you are to impress others. Be yourself, your true self.

**Understanding** Understanding is using your mind to think clearly, paying careful attention to see the meaning of things. An understanding mind gives you insights and wonderful ideas. An understanding heart gives you empathy and compassion for others. Understanding is the power to think and learn and also to care.

**Unity** Unity helps us work and live together peacefully. We feel connected with each other and all living things. We value the specialness of each person as a gift, not as a reason to fight or be scared. With unity we accomplish more together than any of one of us could alone.