

Character during crisis



We are living through challenging and turbulent times. Americans are facing an international health pandemic, financial uncertainty, racial tensions, and civil unrest. It can be easy to feel helpless – wondering what possible impact someone like me can have on such great problems?

We can start with what is within our control: our character. Start by reflecting on the Six Pillars of Character (trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship). Think of the Six Pillars of Character as 'I' and 'action.' We can ask ourselves: what am I doing to act in a capacity worthy of trust, how am I demonstrating respect, am I being responsible for my actions and consequences of my choices, are my decisions fair and equitable to those that are impacted, am I demonstrating a caring heart, am I being a good citizen fulfilling my duties and responsibilities?

Values like the Six Pillars guide us through difficult times and the actions we take. It is in these moments that we would do well to remember the words of Edward Everett Hale.

“I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.”

This is our challenge. What is the thing you can do? And not just today, but tomorrow, and next week, a year from now, and

for the rest of your life because we know that there is always a way for us to get better, individually and collectively.

The issues that confront us are immense and it can be tempting to cave to feelings of inadequacy. But the fact remains, while you cannot do everything, you can do something. And remember, character counts in everything you do.