

# Image isn't you character

Your image isn't your character. Character is what you are as a person. Character education quotations.

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## Return to learn: Trustworthiness

This year, perhaps more than any other, parents, educators, and students are making incredibly challenging decisions. It's important in these moments to assume best intentions, and trust that everyone is trying to do what they think is right and necessary to ensure a safe and impactful education experience.

In situations where there isn't a clear and obvious answer, it's useful to have a tool, like the Integrity-in Action Checklist, to help check our decision-making. Not every decision will pass each test below. Sometimes, the right decision isn't fair to everyone, for example. However, checking your actions against the Integrity-in-Action Checklist can help ensure that you make good choices and maintain trust.

## INTEGRITY-IN-ACTION CHECKLIST

Would my decisions pass each of these tests?	Yes	No
<b>Golden Rule Test:</b> If the situation was reversed, is this how I would want to be treated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Fairness Test:</b> Is this fair to everybody involved in and affected by my actions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Truth Test:</b> Does this represent the whole truth — no distortions, omissions, or spin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Conscience Test:</b> Would I feel good about this afterward — no regrets, no guilt?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Role Model/Mentor Test:</b> Would the people whose integrity I respect most be proud of this?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Front-Page Test:</b> Would I want this reported on the front page of the newspaper?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Consequences Test:</b> Would this lead to positive consequences and avoid negative consequences now and in the future?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>What-If-Everybody-Did-This Test:</b> Would I want to live in a world where everybody did this?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Guiding Beliefs Test:</b> Would this be supported by the philosophical, religious, political, and/or ideological worldviews guiding my life?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**What if it's still not clear what to do?**

1. Stop!
2. Think it over some more.
3. Seek additional insight from individuals whose integrity you respect.



Adapted from Lickona & Davidson (2005).

**Trustworthiness for Educators:** Even people with the best of intentions can sometimes make the wrong decision, especially when navigating the countless changes created by a global pandemic. As you work to bring students back to the classroom safely, or migrate your lessons to online delivery, use the Integrity-in-Action Checklist to make sure the choices you make are thoughtful and build trust with students, parents, and your colleagues.

**Trustworthiness for Students:** Students can use the Integrity-in-Action Checklist to help them make choices that could impact the health and safety of others. ("Is it fair to my classmates if I don't follow guidelines to help stop the spread of COVID-19?") Likewise, students working remotely can use the checklist to help make good decisions about how they engage with school. ("Do I want others to know that I was watching TV rather than paying attention to this online lesson?")

**Trustworthiness for Parents:** The decisions parents make in the best interest of their child also impact the health, safety, and learning experiences of everyone else at school. Use the Integrity-in-Action Checklist to make sure the decisions you make are not only good for your children, but the teachers and other students with whom they interact. In addition, families can use the checklist to help guide the decisions their students make. “I know it’s uncomfortable to wear a mask, but let’s look at the truth test. While the mask is uncomfortable, the truth is I can wear it, get used to it, and keep myself and others safe.”

Download an Integrity-In-Action Checklist

Learn more about character education.

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## **Making Good Decisions in Tough Times**



We all make countless decisions every day. Should you wear a face mask while out in public? Attend a social justice protest? Confront someone you disagree with?

Some of these decisions have relatively minor consequences (good or bad), while other decisions could have significant implications for us and others. A tool like the Character-in-Action Checklist (below) can help you navigate complicated choices and make the right decision.

When making a decision, ask yourself:

- Will my words and actions be honest, sincere, and reliable?
- If the situation was reversed, is this how I would hope to be treated?
- What are the consequences of my words and actions if I make this choice?
- Is my decision fair to everyone involved in and affected by my actions?
- Is my decision expressing compassion and kindness?

- Would I want to live in a world where everyone makes this choice?

Not every decision will align with each of the Six Pillars of Character. They can come into conflict with each other and even themselves. For example, sometimes the right decision isn't fair to everyone involved. However, by identifying that a decision may not be fair, you can address the issue, explain why you made the decision, and provide support to those who perceive the decision as unfair. Or, sometimes the right choice may be contrary to a previous commitment, thus not in alignment with the trustworthiness test. Knowing this can help you determine how to honor your word when your decision doesn't allow you to keep your word.

We're facing troubling times and we can all contribute to the greater good by making sound decisions that reflect our best selves.

## CHARACTER-IN-ACTION CHECKLIST: SIX PILLARS



When faced with a choice or dilemma, consider the following:

Would my decisions pass each of these tests?	Yes	No
<b>Trustworthiness Test:</b> Would my words and actions be honest, sincere, and reliable?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Respect Test:</b> If the situation was reversed, is this how I would want to be treated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Responsibility Test:</b> What would be the consequences of my words and actions and would I do the right thing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Fairness Test:</b> Would this be fair to everybody involved in and affected by my actions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Caring Test:</b> Would my words and actions express compassion and kindness?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Citizenship Test:</b> Would I want to live in a world where everybody did this?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**What if it's still not clear what to do?**

1. Stop!
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Adapted from Lickona & Davidson (2005).

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## 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?

# **Building Trust (Grades K-5)**

Students develop and demonstrate the character trait trustworthiness. They understand that trust is an essential ingredient in meaningful and lasting relationships as well as school and career success and they strive to earn the trust of others by demonstrating the ethical virtues of integrity, honesty, promise-keeping and loyalty.

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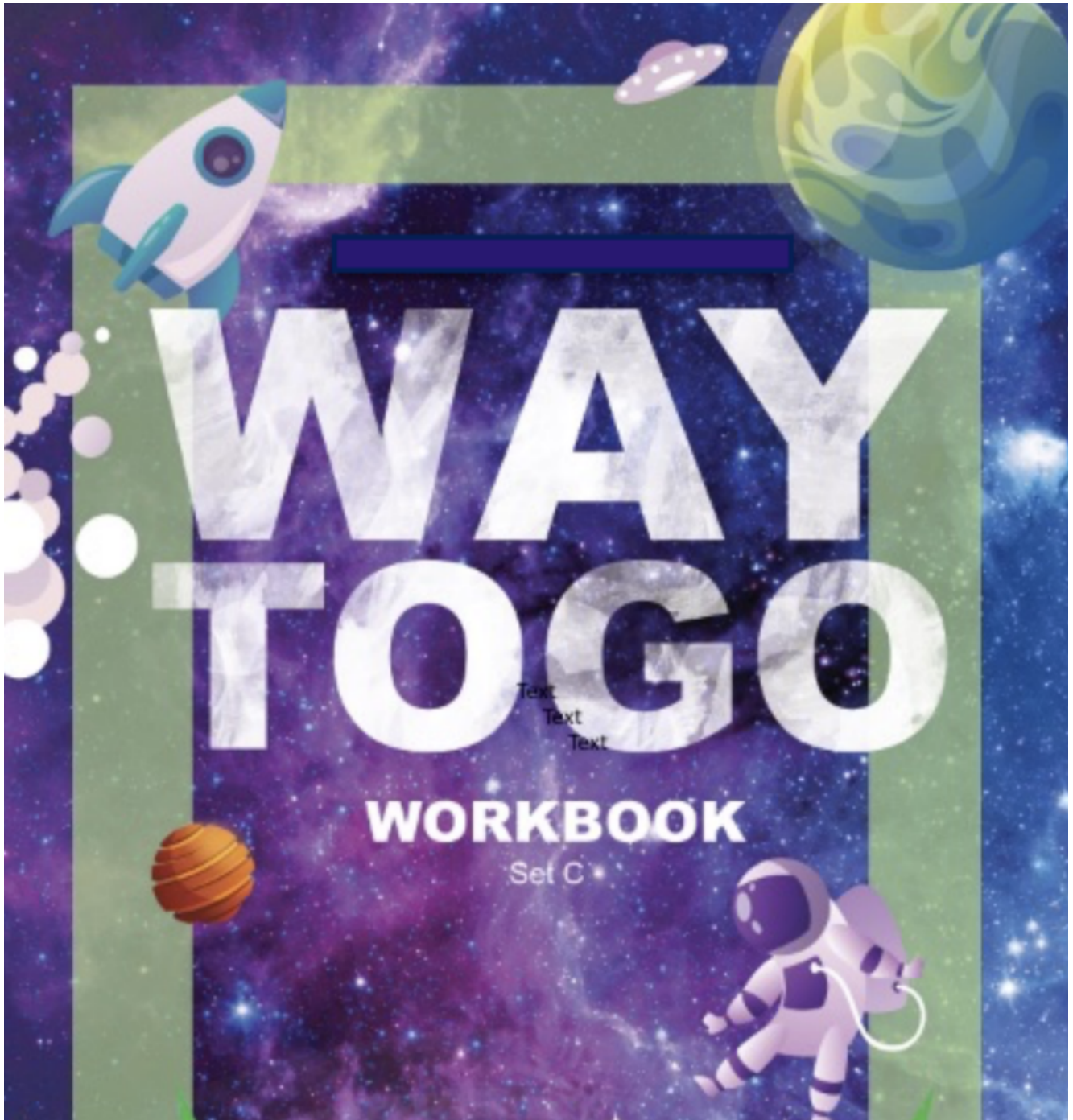
## **Traits of Trustworthy People (Grades 6-12)**

Students develop and demonstrate the character trait of trustworthiness. They understand that trust is an essential ingredient in meaningful and lasting relationships, as well as school and career success, and they strive to earn the trust of others by demonstrating the ethical virtues of integrity, honesty, promise-keeping, and loyalty.

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## **Way To Go Lesson Plans**





CC! can help schools with a resource to provide online lessons for use during this time that schools are closed.

Teachers can share with students a 10-12 minute lesson incorporating compelling images, quotations and thought-provoking short writing and discussion activities that focus on each of the three core domains of student development: academic, social/emotional and character.

We are providing a number of these lessons free to any teacher that would like to incorporate character into their online



learning experiences.

Elementary School Way To Go Lessons

Middle School Way to Go Lessons

High School Way to Go Lessons

Learn more about character education.

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# The Six Pillars of Character and the Holidays



As we gather around those who are most important to us this holiday season, we should keep in mind the Six Pillars of Character. Each Pillar can offer a new way to spread holiday

cheer and joy to friends, family, coworkers, neighbors and even strangers.

**Trustworthiness** It can take a lot for us to put our trust in someone and for someone to trust us, and the holiday season is a great time to work on building trust. The most simple and straightforward way to build trust is to keep your word. If you say you'll do something, do it. If you make a promise, keep it. During the holidays, we often count on one another to get the gifts, make the food, send the cards out or put up the decorations. By keeping track of and completing your holiday responsibilities you become dependable and build trust. Trust can even be built by inviting new people to your holiday gatherings, cooking a dish for a family in need or shoveling snow for a neighbor.

**Respect** Sometimes respect can get lost in the shuffle of the hectic holidays. When we are in crowded stores it can be easy to get frustrated with store employees or other shoppers. We need to remember that we are all doing our best, but sometimes stress can get the best of us. In these times, we should remember to always treat others how we would want to be treated. Being kind and forgiving to overworked retail employees, letting a busy family go ahead of us in line or using reusable shopping bags shows that we have respect for those around us and the environment. The holidays are all about being grateful, so show those around you that you respect them by following the golden rule.

**Responsibility** If you're the one hosting a holiday gathering, you have a lot of responsibility on your shoulders. Always keep your word and do what you said you were going to do, but don't be afraid to ask for help. If you need friends or family to bring a dish, help you clean up or watch your kids or pets, reach out to them. This can help you meet your responsibilities, but also help show you how responsible others in your life are.

**Fairness** It's always the thought that counts. The holidays are not about comparing gifts that you have given or received. The holidays should be focused on celebrating the relationships of those closest to us. It can be easy to get caught up in the material things and the gift-giving, but making sure that we treat those around us with fairness should be at the forefront of our minds.

**Caring** There are countless ways that we can show that we care this holiday season. We usually show that we care by giving gifts to our loved ones, but we can show that we care in other ways as well. By donating our unused clothing, donating blood, cooking for a family in need or simply sending holiday cards we can show that we are thinking about all members of our community. For those that don't have close families or don't have the means to buy gifts, the holidays can be a difficult time. So, let's show them that we care and want them to have a merry holiday season.

**Citizenship** The holidays are a great time to show that we are dedicated citizens. One of the best and easiest ways we can do this is by supporting local businesses and local restaurants. We can show our support of our communities if we do our holiday shopping at local stores that are run by our neighbors. Going to events put on around the neighborhood is also important. Whether it's a craft fair, a holiday light show or an ice skating event, we can connect with members of our community while supporting those who make our communities so special.

Learn more about character education.

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# Interpersonal Skills (Grades 6-12)



## **Character Education Objective:**

- Students will discuss how to develop and maintain positive relationships in their lives.

## **Content Objective:**

- Students will define, establish, and maintain healthy relationships.

## **Language Objective:**

- Students will employ strategies to promote positive relationship building and connections.

## **Purpose:**

Human beings need opportunities to build and maintain positive relationships in all stages of life. Providing teens with opportunities to develop a clear definition of what healthy relationships look and sound like is important to help ensure health development, physically, socially, and emotionally. Creating positive models and situations to practice healthy

boundaries and communication is important to grow relationships and social connections.

## **Lesson**

### Independent

- Who do you have a healthy, positive relationship within your life?
- How does this connection with this individual make you feel?

### Productive Group Work:

- Read this article and/or infographic about connection and the impact on health.
- List the impact of human connections on health

### Whole Group Discussion:

- What did you learn?
- What are some ways to spend more time with friends?

### Reflection Journal (Independent task)

- Compare and Contrast the feelings/benefits of social media time with friends and in-person time with friends
- How will you get out from behind the screen and be seen this week?

#BeSeen

#CharacterCounts

Learn more about character education.

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# Interpersonal Skills (Grades K-5)



## **Character Education Objective:**

- Students will discuss how connection increases communication and collaboration.

## **Content Objective:**

- Students will discuss what the Six Pillars look like in them, their friends and the people they admire.

## **Language Objective:**

- Students will journal about how they can actively work to connect with one another.

## **Purpose:**

Including intentional connection time with your students is a great way to show the importance of connecting with one another. When we are connected we communicate better, collaborate more successfully and assume better intentions in one another. We often think of connection as something to check off the list at the beginning of the year a getting to



know you activity, but in reality it is something that needs to happen regularly. The following activity will allow students to connect over character traits they see in themselves and those that are important to them.

## **Lesson**

- Watch “Six Pillar Shuffle” and encourage the students to dance along.
- Electricity Split the students in two equal groups. Each group will be a team. Encourage them to get together and create team names. One team will get in a line standing shoulder to shoulder and all facing one way. The other team will get in another line shoulder to shoulder and facing the other team. The lines should be a few feet apart. There should be an aisle between the lines.
- If students point directly in front them, they should be pointing at only one student and one student should be pointing at them. This is their partner for the first round. Have students discuss the following question with their partner: What’s your favorite cartoon character? Now, students will play a game to get their next partner. To set up, you keep the teams in their lines and determine which side will be the start and which side will be the end of the line. At the end of the line, place an item on the ground evenly between the last two players of each team. The game is passing a high five down their team’s line from the starting side until it gets to the last person. The only rule is that you may not pass the high five until the high five is given to you.
- Once the high five hits the last person then the last person will grab the item from the ground. The first team to grab the item is the winner. The team that lost will move one person to the left. The person on the furthest left spot will walk down the aisle to the other end of the line. If you want, encourage the students to

do a little Six Pillar Shuffle down the aisle! This should give students a new partner. With their new partner, have students discuss: What makes a person trustworthy? Have the students get ready to pass along the high five again.

- Once the winning team is determined, have the team that lost move one to the left again. This will give the students a new partner. Have the new partners discuss a question and then repeat the game and questions until you have answered all of them: How do you respect your friends? Who is someone in your life you think is responsible? Why? Was there a time in your life when something was unfair? How did you handle that? How has someone show you they cared for you? Who is someone you admire that shows good citizenship?
- When the game is done, talk about the power of connection. When we do these games, we are connecting with one another and finding things we have in common or how we think similarly. When we find that connection with someone we are kinder, more respectful and work better together. It's important to take the time to connect with each other and it doesn't always take a game. Encourage students to take the time to connect to someone they don't know well during lunch, recess, group projects or collaboration times in the classroom.
- Have the students journal about ways they can make connections throughout the day. Connection is not something you can do just once and check it off the list. It must be done continually. Connection is also something that doesn't always come naturally and sometimes needs to be intentionally planned. During this journaling time, you should encourage students to think about those two things and how they will work in connection into their day more frequently.

## **Family Connection**

Give a brief overview of the importance of connection. Encourage families to watch a video about the power of connecting with those who may look and think differently than you: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sQuM5e0QGLg>

Give the families the following prompts to connect around character development:

- What makes a person trustworthy?
- How do you respect your friends?
- Who is someone in your life you think is responsible? Why?
- Was there a time in your life when something was unfair? How did you handle that?
- How has someone show you they cared for you?
- Who is someone you admire that shows good citizenship?

Learn more about character education.