



*"Sow a thought,  
You reap an act;  
Sow an act,  
You reap a habit;  
Sow a habit,  
You reap a character;  
Sow a character,  
You reap a destiny."  
-- Samuel Smiles*

## Evaluate Your Character

1. Would your authorities say you have good character?
2. Have you caused damage to relationships because of character problems (dishonesty, disrespect, anger, etc.)?
3. What do you value most - wealth, position, success or good character?
4. Is your character the same when you are alone as when you are with others? --the same at home as out in the public?
5. When you are wrong, do you quickly admit it?
6. Is your focus more on yourself than others?
7. Do you do what is right because it is right, or because others will praise you for it?

## Building Character

**Building character in our community** starts with building it in your own life. You may not have thought much about good character before and may have never been taught what each **character quality** means. You are really building character all the time with the choices you make; the question is-will you build good character or bad character?

You can start by making building good character a high priority. You can choose to let the hard situations in your life become 'testing ground' for your character, based on the right choices you make. Good character is the product of a thousand small choices that add up to a lifestyle of good character. Make a conscious effort to develop good character and join with others in our community who are **committing** to doing so!

- Begin by "thinking character." Look at situations around you through the grid of character; in other words, evaluate what you see and hear from the standpoint of character rather than the usual measuring sticks. What character quality was needed? What character quality was displayed?
- Evaluate your goals by the character qualities it would take to reach them. Begin to **praise** others for their character, rather than for their achievements. (For example, honor a graduate for his diligence in his studies, rather than just congratulating him for getting his degree.)
- Learn about each **character quality**. A **new character quality** will be featured here each month.
  - Memorize the definition for that quality
  - Learn the negative opposite; for example, diligence vs. laziness. The mental picture you get of the negative will help you better understand the positive quality
- Assess your weaknesses and strengths in character. Don't think that strength in some qualities justifies weakness in others. All qualities are needed in order to live a balanced and successful life. Then-
  - List the qualities you want to develop. For example, if you are always late, you might want to work on deference, responsibility, sensitivity, and punctuality.
  - Make a plan. List your goals and then make a list of achievable steps to reach that goal.
  - Find a role model who is strong in the quality you want to develop.
  - Place visual reminders of the quality you want to develop in your "space." Colorful posters and calendars are **available resources** to help you.
- Surround yourself with people of good character. Just as two pendulum clocks placed together will swing in synchroniza-tion, we tend to become like the people we spend time with. Purpose not to respond in poor character to those who are acting in poor character. Let your good character influence others.
- **Reward and honor** those who show good character.

## "I Will" Statements

The character quality featured each month will be followed by 5 "I will" statements. These break down the character quality into small action steps that are clear and do-able.

*"The ultimate test of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and moments of convenience, but where he stands in moments of challenge and moments of controversy."  
-- Martin Luther King, Jr.*

*"If you aim at nothing, you will surely hit it"*