

CONCEPTS & CONNECTIONS:

— Leadership and Character —

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On Character and Servant-Leadership: *Ten Characteristics of Effective, Caring Leaders*

by Larry C. Spears

Our fundamental understanding of character has much to do with the essential traits exhibited by a person. In recent years there has been a growing interest in the nature of character and character education, based upon a belief that positive character traits can be both taught and learned. Many people today are familiar with the *Character Counts!* program of the Josephson Institute of Ethics. That program has been

adopted by a number of schools and communities nationwide and teaches core values that they call "Six Pillars of Character." Those six particular character values are: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship.

The nature of character and its relationship to leaders has also taken on increased significance in recent years. A number of noted leadership authors have looked at issues of a leader's character. James Hillman (1996), in *The Soul's Code: In Search of Character and Calling*, describes the "invisible source of personal consistency, for which I am using the word 'habit,' psychology today calls character. Character refers to deep structures of personality that are particularly resistant to change" (p. 260).

The literature on leadership includes a number of different listings of character traits as practiced by leaders. I particularly like Warren Bennis's (1989) short list as contained in his book, *On Becoming a Leader*, in which he identifies, "vision, inspiration, empathy and trustworthiness" (p. 140) as key characteristics of effective leaders. Much of the leadership literature includes as an implicit assumption the belief that positive characteristics can-and-should be encouraged and practiced by leaders. Robert Greenleaf, the originator of the term, "servant-leadership," is someone who thought and wrote a great deal about the nature of servant-leadership and character.

Servant-Leadership and Character

The servant-leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The best test is do those served grow as persons: do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society, will they benefit, or, at least, not be further deprived?

The Servant as Leader
Robert K. Greenleaf

With that definition in 1970, retired AT&T executive Robert K. Greenleaf (1904-1990) coined the term servant-leadership and launched a quiet revolution in the way in which we view and practice leadership. Three decades later the concept of servant-leadership is increasingly viewed as an ideal leadership form to which untold numbers of people and organizations aspire. In fact, we are witnessing today an unparalleled explosion of interest in, and practice of, servant-leadership.

We are experiencing a rapid shift in many businesses and not-for-profit organizations — away from the more traditional autocratic and hierarchical models of leadership and toward servant-leadership *as a way of being* in relationship with others. Servant-leadership seeks to involve others in decision-making, is strongly based in ethical and caring behavior, and enhances the personal growth of workers while

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Connections From The Director

The quality and worth of an individual's leadership ability may, in large part, be measured in terms of their intentions, their values, beliefs, and principles – in other words, measured in terms of their character. This edition of *Concepts & Connections* is an exploration of the concept of character, what some would suggest is the most crucial, yet elusive element of leadership.

To construct a foundation for our conversation, we must first attempt to define what we mean by "character." The Center for Character Development at the United States Air Force Academy, I believe, has done a nice job of constructing a working definition of character development. They define character as the growth of those aspects of the individual that represent his or her ethical worth, including behavior, cognition, affect, values, personality, identity, and skills that are not moral themselves but support moral functioning. Working from this definition then, character education can be understood as a pervasive, multifaceted, endeavor founded on a clear vision of the moral leader. Larry Spears, feature author for this edition, provides a description of what moral leadership might look like, delineating a set of character traits that he has identified as essential to the practice of servant-leadership.

Leadership scholar Warren Bennis, in his study of how twenty-nine successful people learned to become leaders, notes that self-knowledge is an essential part of defining a leader's integrity. Bennis (1989) writes, "To become a leader, then you must become yourself, become the maker of your own life" (p. 51). He observes that knowing oneself is "...the most difficult task any of us faces. But until you truly know yourself, strengths and weaknesses, know what you want to do and why you want to do it, you cannot succeed in any but the most superficial sense of the word" (p. 51). If we wish to be judged by the content of our character, we must have insight

into its composition. We might conclude that one of our tasks as leadership development educators is to help our audience gain greater focus concerning their values and beliefs, those qualities that serve as the cornerstone for a firm character structure. This process of self examination may not always be a simple or straightforward one, as Frank Shushok, Jr. and Robert Kelly point out in their article "What Leaders Do When No One is Looking: Values Over Consequences." Shushok and Kelly challenge us to re-conceptualize the motivational influence of consequence on our decision-making processes.

In *Character: America's Search for Leadership*, Gail Sheehy says character is what was yesterday and will be tomorrow. Character establishes both our day-to-day demeanor and our destiny. Therefore it is not merely useful, but essential to examine the character of those who desire to lead us. She suggests that we must be careful whom we choose to lead, because whom we choose is who we will be. I relate Sheehy's words to many conversations I have had both with students in my leadership classes and with students involved in student organizations, workshops, and conferences. I sense a graying of what students and student leaders view as being right and wrong.

For today's student, what is right or wrong changes with the situation; I find students to be unclear and inconsistent as to what they truly believe. I sense a numbness or "what ever" kind of glare in their eyes when challenged to respond to issues that require them to base their decisions on foundational principles. My gut churns in class discussions or during student group meetings as I hold back my intuitive response: "just simply show some character." In our Program Spotlight piece, Vern P. Hazard, a teacher at Deer Park High School, North Campus in Deer Park, Texas describes a leadership development program for high school students that holds character development as a central goal. The *Teen Leadership*

Program asks students to examine their values, define what they believe in, and challenges them to lead a principle-centered life.

Bertrand Russell, shares in Arthur Levine and Jeanette Cureton's book, *When Hope and Fear Collide*, that students must learn the meaning of values, be able to distinguish between values and facts, understand the difference between relative and absolute values and differentiate between good, better, and best values. He also suggests they need to develop mechanisms for weighing and choosing among values. Finally, he points to their need to comprehend how values function in our society and in their lives: the changing nature of values over time, how values fit into cultures, the place of values in an individual life, and what happens to minority values in a society. The challenge lying ahead of us as educators is to find ways to help our students as they negotiate this complex and challenging process. We hope that this issue of *Concepts & Connections* provides you with some useful resources with which to meet this challenge. ■



Craig Slack
Director

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On Character and Servant-Leadership:

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improving the caring and quality of organizational life.

The words servant and leader are usually thought of as being opposites. In deliberately bringing those words together in a meaningful way, Robert Greenleaf gave birth to the paradoxical term "servant-leadership." In the years since then, many of today's most creative thinkers are writing and speaking about servant-leadership as an emerging leadership paradigm for the twenty-first century. The list is long and includes: James Autry, Warren Bennis, Peter Block, John Carver, Stephen Covey, Max DePree, Joseph Jaworski, James Kouzes, Lorraine Matusak, Parker Palmer, M. Scott Peck, Peter Senge, Peter Vaill, Margaret Wheatley, and Danah Zohar, to name but a few of today's cutting-edge leadership authors and advocates of servant-leadership. In her groundbreaking book on quantum sciences and leadership, *Rewiring the Corporate Brain*, Zohar (1997) goes so far as to state that, "Servant-leadership is the essence of quantum thinking and quantum leadership" (p. 146).

Ten Characteristics of a Servant-Leader

After some years of carefully considering Greenleaf's original writ-

ings, I have identified a set of ten characteristics of the servant-leader that I view as being of critical importance — central to the development of servant-leaders. My own work currently involves a deepening understanding of the following characteristics and how they contribute to the meaningful practice of servant-leadership. These ten characteristics include:

1. **Listening:** Leaders have traditionally been valued for their communication and decision-making skills. Although these are also important skills for the servant-leader, they need to be reinforced by a deep commitment to listening intently to others. The servant-leader seeks to identify the will of a group and helps to clarify that will. He or she listens receptively to what is being said and unsaid. Listening also encompasses getting in touch with one's own inner voice. Listening, coupled with periods of reflection, is essential to the growth and well being of the servant-leader.
2. **Empathy:** The servant-leader strives to understand and empathize with others. People need to be accepted and recognized for their special and unique spirits. One assumes the good intentions of co-workers and colleagues and does not reject them as people, even when one may be forced to refuse to accept certain behaviors or performance. The most successful servant-leaders are those who have become skilled empathetic listeners.
3. **Healing:** The healing of relationships is a powerful force for

"We are experiencing a rapid shift in many businesses and not-for-profit organizations — away from the more traditional autocratic and hierarchical models of leadership and toward servant-leadership as a way of being in relationship with others."

transformation and integration. One of the great strengths of servant-leadership is the potential for healing one's self and one's relationship to others. Many people have broken spirits and have suffered from a variety of emotional hurts. Although this is a part of being human, servant-leaders recognize that they have an opportunity to help make whole those with whom they come in contact. In his essay, *The Servant as Leader*, Greenleaf writes, "There is something subtle communicated to one who is being served and led if, implicit in the compact between servant-leader and led, is the understanding that the search for wholeness is something they share."

4. **Awareness:** General awareness, and especially self-awareness, strengthens the servant-leader. Awareness helps one in understanding issues involving ethics, power and values. It lends itself to being able to view most situations from a more integrated, holistic position. As Greenleaf observed: "Awareness is not a giver of solace—it is just the opposite. It is a disturber and an awakener. Able leaders are usually sharply awake and reasonably disturbed. They are not seekers after solace. They have their own inner serenity."
5. **Persuasion:** Another characteristic of servant-leaders is a reliance on persuasion, rather than on one's positional authority, in making decisions within an organization. The servant-leader

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*This newsletter
is printed on
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seeks to convince others, rather than coerce compliance. This particular element offers one of the clearest distinctions between the traditional authoritarian model and that of servant-leadership. The servant-leader is effective at building consensus within groups. This emphasis on persuasion over coercion finds its roots in the beliefs of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)—the denominational body to which Robert Greenleaf belonged.

- 6. Conceptualization:** Servant-leaders seek to nurture their abilities to *dream great dreams*. The ability to look at a problem or an organization from a conceptualizing perspective means that one must think beyond day-to-day realities. For many leaders, this is a characteristic that requires discipline

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and practice. The traditional leader is consumed by the need to achieve short-term operational goals. The leader who wishes to also be a servant-leader must stretch his or her thinking to encompass broader-based conceptual thinking. Within organizations, conceptualization is, by its very nature, the proper role of boards of trustees or directors. Unfortunately, boards can sometimes become involved in the day-to-day operations — something that should always be discouraged — and, thus, fail to provide the visionary concept for an institution. Trustees need to be mostly conceptual in their orientation, staffs need to be mostly operational in their perspective, and the most effective executive leaders probably need to develop both perspectives within themselves. Servant-leaders are called to seek a delicate balance between conceptual thinking and a day-to-day operational approach.

- 7. Foresight:** Closely related to conceptualization, the ability to foresee the likely outcome of a situation is hard to define, but easier to identify. One knows foresight when one experiences it. Foresight is a characteristic that enables the servant-leader to understand the lessons from the past, the realities of the present, and the likely consequence of a decision for the future. It is also deeply rooted within the intuitive mind. Foresight remains a largely unexplored area in leadership studies, but one most deserving of careful attention.
- 8. Stewardship:** Peter Block (author of *Stewardship* and *The Empowered Manager*) has defined stewardship as “holding something in trust for another.” Robert Greenleaf’s view of all institutions was one in which CEOs, staff, and trustees all played significant roles in holding their institutions in trust for the greater good of society. Servant-leadership, like stewardship, assumes first and foremost a commitment to serving the needs of others. It also emphasizes the use of openness and persuasion, rather than control.

- 9. Commitment to the growth of people:** Servant-leaders believe that people have an intrinsic value beyond their tangible contributions as workers. As such, the servant-leader is deeply committed to the growth of each and every individual within his or her organization. The servant-leader recognizes the tremendous responsibility to do everything in his or her power to nurture the personal and professional growth of employees and colleagues. In practice, this can include (but is not limited to) concrete actions such as making funds available for personal and professional development, taking a personal interest in the ideas and suggestions from everyone, encouraging worker involvement in decision-making, and actively assisting laid-off employees to find other positions.
- 10. Building community:** The servant-leader senses that much has been lost in recent human history as a result of the shift from local communities to large institutions as the primary shaper of human lives. This awareness causes the servant-leader to seek to identify some means for building community among those who work within a given institution. Servant-leadership suggests that true community can be created among those who work in businesses and other institutions. Greenleaf said, “All that is needed to rebuild community as a viable life form for large numbers of people is for enough servant-leaders to show the way, not by mass movements, but by each servant-leader demonstrating his or her unlimited liability for a quite specific community-related group.”

These ten characteristics of servant-leadership are by no means exhaustive. However, they do serve to communicate the power and promise that this concept offers to those who are open to its invitation and challenge.

Interest in the meaning and practice of servant-leadership continues to grow. Hundreds of books, articles, and papers on the subject have now been published. Many of the compa-

nies named to Fortune magazine's annual listing of "The 100 Best Companies to Work For" espouse servant-leadership and have integrated it into their corporate cultures. As more and more organizations and people have sought to put servant-leadership into practice, the work of The Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership, now in its 35th year, continues to expand in order to help meet that need.

Servant-leadership characteristics often occur naturally within many individuals; and, like many natural tendencies, they can be enhanced through learning and practice. Servant-leadership offers great hope for the future in creating better, more caring institutions. ■

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What Leaders Do When No One is Looking: Values Over Consequences

by Frank Shushok, Jr. and Robert D. Kelly

Today, many people are talking about values-centered leadership. Simplified, this notion contends that some leaders understand and incorporate a constellation of values that are then used to drive decisions and behavior. It appears there are a reasonable and growing number of leaders operating from this perspective; yet values-centered leaders may be far less common if one examines the cause of their actions rather than the results. Many individuals who claim to lead and decide by values are in fact driven by consequences. In short, an honest decision is not necessarily the result of an "honesty" core value.

Making the right choices based on the right values is not an easy task, as we are often focused on the consequence of our own self-interest. Only those individuals who truly embrace integrity and honesty, principles that encourage personal reflection and an intense examination of defining virtues, should claim to be values-centered leaders. These are the leaders who travel the road of serious ethical inquiry (Canon & Brown, 1985).

"Making the right choices based on the right values is not an easy task, as we are often focused on the consequence of our own self-interest. Only those individuals who truly embrace integrity and honesty, principles that encourage personal reflection and an intense examination of defining virtues, should claim to be values-centered leaders."

Let us use a fictitious character named "Fred" to help demonstrate this point. Fred has adopted "honesty" as a personal core value; one, which he says always, drives his decisions. On rare occasions, however, Fred recognizes unusual slips in his personal honesty code. No one is perfect, Fred reminds himself. Still, Fred is honestly bothered.

Last Saturday was a prime example of his "split" honest personality. Fred had spent the entire morning above the dishonest fray. He had even been a champ through long and tedious meetings with his executive board where, as a junior at his university, he serves as the organization's president. The meeting had involved discussions about whether or not to fund the long held campus tradition of "spring party weekend." The controversy arose when a contingency of students and faculty called for the event to be alcohol-free. Of course, the overwhelming majority of

students wanted the event to be as it had been in years past— a real beer bash.

Interestingly, an influential student leader who also serves as president of a prestigious honor society

told Fred that the event should undergo no changes until after they graduated. She even went so far as to hint to Fred that he would be inducted as a new member of the honor society if he voted the alcohol-free initiative out. Fred was able to manage a polite but honest response when the president asked how he would vote, relaying that he'd actually been thinking not about the vote, but that he was late for lunch with some friends.

Over lunch, just as Fred articulated a final enthusiastic thought about keeping the spring party weekend as is, he realized he was having to manufacture false elation about the whole event. Honestly, Fred felt the event needed a change. In fact, he felt rather trapped. His closest friends, the alumni, and the majority of students wanted the event to remain the same campus tradition it had been since 1960. However, he knew that if he voted his conscience he would not receive the peer votes needed for induction into the honor society. On the other hand, Fred knew that his actions would win the hearts of many faculty and administrators, who could be influential in helping him find a first rate job after graduation. In addition, he knew that earning membership into Phi Beta Kappa, another honor society that he respected more than the other, required the praise of faculty, not students.

After lunch, feeling sick and rather overwhelmed on his way back to the meeting, Fred began the "honest" conversation with the other student leaders. Fred voted to make spring party weekend an alcohol-free event. The result, he knew, was burned bridges with other student leaders and no honor society induction. He thought to himself, however, "it's the 'honest' thing to do" . . . and told himself that Phi Beta Kappa and a good beginning job would be much more important aids for achieving his career goals.

On the surface, it appears Fred's champion value of honesty is at the forefront of his decision, yet inside his mind, values of self-interest and prestige reign. Even though Fred was convinced he could not be honest about his true feelings with his committee, he suddenly became willing to champion honesty above all

else after he realized his decision could sway faculty support in earning a job and the Phi Beta Kappa membership he so "valued". In short, it is prestige that motivates Fred, not personal integrity.

Given his consistent history of being honest, it might be argued that Fred is indeed allowing his values conviction to direct his general behavior. But, like most of us, what Fred fails to realize is that it is often simply in our best interest to be honest. Being honest generally keeps us out of trouble, fosters a positive reputation and makes us feel good about ourselves. When we are rewarded for making a values-based decision, it may not be a values-based decision after all. In fact, it's likely consequence driven. Although it may appear Fred is values-centered, and he actually believes himself to be, in truth, he is not.

We were struck recently by a news story highlighted on HBO's program *Real Sports*. A graduate assistant soccer coach at St. John's University was pursuing his dream of coaching college soccer and obtaining a graduate degree in theology. In return for his work as an assistant coach, his tuition was covered and he was provided a financial stipend. During his tenure at St. John's, two events occurred which resulted in a values based conflict.

He was researching human rights abuses by American companies in foreign countries and learned particu-

"The task of being a values-centered leader is much more challenging than frequently making "right" decisions, as right decisions often come with personal rewards. But what happens when there is no reward and there are potentially personal consequences for having integrity? When we find ourselves facing one of those rare slips from our principles, we ought to consider the root of the choice."

lar details about the Nike Corporation's involvement in such abuses. At the same time, St. John's athletic department was negotiating a multi-million dollar sponsorship agreement with Nike. This graduate student publicly criticized such an agreement as inconsistent with the values of the institution. Moreover, he refused to wear the Nike swoosh on his coaching jersey as was stipulated in the agreement between Nike and St. John's. When university officials demanded that he either cooperate or forfeit his employment (and both his coaching dream and financial support for his academic goals), this graduate assistant coach refused to put aside his values lens for making decisions, no matter the consequences.

Consequence is not without its own importance. Strike and Soltis (1992) encourage leaders to balance multiple needs and perspectives in making decisions. We believe that foreseeable consequences must be calculated in order to make an ethical decision, however, considering consequences falls short of the goal of being a values-centered leader with character and integrity rising

above all else. Our assertion agrees with Beauchamp and Childress's (1994) theory of non-consequentialism which states that a truly values-based decision is one made without consideration of the consequences. Of course, human beings are incredibly self-interested creatures, and

therefore, a purely values-based leader is quite rare.

The task of being a values-centered leader is much more challenging than frequently making "right" decisions, as right decisions often come with personal rewards. But what happens when there is no reward and there are potentially personal consequences for having integrity? When we find ourselves facing one of those rare slips from our principles, we ought to consider the root of the choice. Could it be that when we make unethical choices, they are the ones whereby we aren't rewarded for the ethical decision? If one finds that to be the case, one should think twice before considering oneself as being values-centered, but instead consequence-centered. ■

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Look Who Has Joined the NCLP Since January...

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Program Spotlight

The Teen Leadership Program: The Journey of Leadership

by Vern P. Hazard II

*"Two roads diverge
in the wood and I,
I took the one less
traveled by, and that
has made all the
difference."*

Robert Frost

When was the last time you heard something newsworthy or positive about teenagers? Believe it or not, there are teenagers in the world that do positive and motivating things for society. They give us inspiration, they give us hope for our future generations, and they fill our hearts and souls with visions of greatness. They not only build relationships with their parents, but they also build strong and lasting relationships with peers and teachers. You may be asking yourself, "Where are such teenagers?" You will find these students in schools that participate in a program by M. B. Flippen called *Teen Leadership*.

"We must leave our mark on life while we have it in our power," states Isak Dineson. *Teen Leadership* gives each and every student the opportunity to leave his or her mark on life. The class gives them the opportunity to develop relationships with their teachers, peers, family, and all who cross their path in life. The students are greeted at the door each day with a firm handshake and a warm smile. Not only

"They must listen and respect each other's opinions in order to grow, not only as individuals, but also as members of society. The lesson emphasizes that being flexible is an art that one must achieve in order to succeed in this area and that the ability to listen is a strong quality and characteristic needed for leadership."

does this set the tone for "engage" and "explore," but this is also where relationships are born. "To be leaders you must have two basic elements in your life: skills and principles. Through this course they learn these skills and they will have the opportunity to become good at using them. They will also be challenged to develop the principles that will be the foundation of their life. Principles are the foundation of decisions and actions. Learning to live a principles-centered life is critical to personal excellence and success" (Flippen, M.B.). At this point the teacher begins to capture their hearts, in order to capture their minds.

Self-concept is one of the first lessons taught in *Teen Leadership*. Each student is encouraged to recognize that they all have weaknesses and strengths and that in order to grow as a person, they must identify and work on both. Through the lesson they also realize that they control three things every moment of their life. These are

their thoughts, attitudes, and actions. The decision to be a positive or negative person is a choice that each student must make. They also learn that though their views or opinions may differ from others in the class, their voice will still be heard and their ideas respected. They are taught as young adults to

communicate with one another. They must listen and respect each other's opinions in order to grow, not only as individuals, but also as members of society. The lesson emphasizes that being flexible is an art that one must achieve in order to succeed in this area and that the ability to listen is a strong quality and characteristic needed for leadership.

As the semester progresses, the trust between the teacher and the students, and between the students themselves, grows, enabling them to open up more and expose their emotions to the class. Much of the promotion of trust and openness is facilitated through the Full-Value Contract. In this contract we look at the following questions: 1) How would you, as a student, like to be treated by the teacher? 2) How would you, as students, like to treat each other? 3) How do I, the teacher, want you to treat me? and 4) How would you, the student, like to see discipline problems handled? The promises of confidentiality and giving one hundred percent effort are also part of the contract. The students know that they are responsible for their actions and that their choices have consequences, both positive and negative.

"Because we hear selectively and tend to hear negatives more loudly, we need to review the messages that we have received since we were children and see if they fit the present situation. Messages from our past experiences need to be reviewed with regard to what is true and what the overall meaning is. In some cases, we may find that the messages are negative, but in fact, true. Then we will need to find ways to 'reframe' them. This is the process where we take a thought that is negative, but accurate, and put it in a positive context so that we can work with it better. The difference is perspective. A positive perspective is much easier to work with than a negative one" (Flippen,

M.B.). The teacher must be willing to share experiences of reframing in their own lives in order to model the process and encourage its development within the students. Once this development takes place, the growth in every child is endless.

When asked about the process of reframing, Kristen Theis had these words to say in regards to *Teen Leadership*, "The class not only makes you grow to be a great leader, but makes friendships that will last a lifetime. You experience fun, sadness, and a place where you can always express your feelings. Above all, you challenge yourself. I've always been afraid of failure, but now I take chances and try new things. I've learned that you can reframe every negative situation and turn it into a positive experience." Additional topics that are covered and practiced in *Teen Leadership* address areas such as character building, learning to like and accept oneself, inspiring others, offering affirmations to peers, performing acts of kindness, leadership roles, compassion, and learning to say "no" to drugs and other peer pressures. The students also learn to comfortably and properly speak publicly. They are invited to meetings and classrooms throughout the district to give testimonies on what *Teen Leadership* has done for them.

Because of the training they have had in the classroom, the students are able to communicate and interact well with adults. Other values established in this program are ways to set goals, practicing effective social skills, and understanding that choices made will always reap consequences. Students write in their journals daily. The teacher will have a topic to discuss for the day and the students may respond to a journal question that covers that topic. This helps them to clarify their thoughts and prepares them for classroom discussions. With this activity, students are able to practice skills in group interaction and respecting the thoughts and opinions of others.

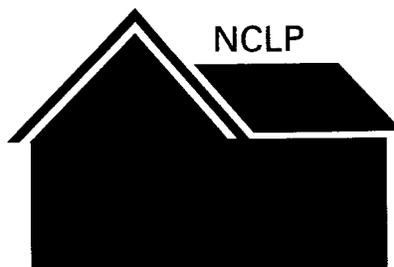
In conclusion, I would like to end my discussion of what *Teen Leadership* represents with a quote from Amber Orr, "*Teen Leadership* has helped me develop relationships

and feel better about myself. When I first started the class, I admit, I was very skeptical, but it really has changed my outlook on life. I think *Teen Leadership* is important in helping students have a more positive attitude towards life and others. They learn how to be a leader and how to succeed in life."

At this time I would like to thank Flip Flippen and Lee Bason for giving me the opportunity and privilege to be a part of the *Teen Leadership* family. I have been blessed and honored in teaching this program at Deer Park High School, North Campus for the last four years. I would also like to thank Mr. Gary Berry, Mr. Grover Belcher, and Dr. David Hicks for their vision, mission, and purpose behind *Teen Leadership*. It is a never-ending joy to see the transformation of young students as they enter with the mind and self-concept of a young adult, and depart with the confidence and determination of a true leader.

As I look back upon my youth, I recall the positive influences that inspired and motivated me during my journey of life. I remember a teacher and a coach that spent the extra time to engage and explore who I was as a person. These were the type of teachers who possessed the skills of capturing this child's heart. I have come to realize that we are all blessed as individuals and that everything happens for a reason. I truly believe that with the guidance of *Teen Leadership* and the teachers who have the ability and skills to love and care for their students, we can change the world in a positive way.

For more information on the *Teen Leadership* Program, contact M. B. Flippen and Associates at 1199 Haywood Dr., College Station, TX 77845, or call 1-800-316-4311. Vern Hazard can be reached at vharard@yahoo.com. 🏠



1998 Report Card on the Ethics of American Youth

In 1998 the Josephson Institute of Ethics and the Character Counts! Coalition polled more than 20,000 middle and high school aged students nationwide about their ethical beliefs and practices (released October 19, 1998). Survey results pointed to, as the Coalition's press release termed it, "a staggering inconsistency in what they [students] say they believe and how they act."

Highlights of their findings include:

- 97% of students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "It's important for me to be a person with good character."
- 63% cheated during a test in school at least once within the last 12 months.
- 95% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "It's important to me that people trust me."
- 90% lied to a parent at least once within the last 12 months.
- 81% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I am satisfied with the ethics and character of my generation."
- 76% lied to a teacher at least once within the last 12 months.
- 91% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I am satisfied with my own ethics and character."
- 39% stole something from a store at least once within the past 12 months.

Full survey results are available at www.charactercounts.org. 🏠

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Conferences

The Leadership Bookshelf

The Power Of Character: Prominent Americans Talk about Life, Family, Work, Values, and More

Editors: Michael S. Josephson and Wes Hanson
Reviewed by Judith Plummer

What does it REALLY mean to have character? This collection of essays (Jossey-Bass, 1998), a project of the nonprofit Josephson Institute of Ethics, helps us to know what to look for as we are trying to live a morally good life.

Through the diverse perspectives of the 40 contributors to this book, the reader receives insights into the true meaning and importance of character. The fact that each of these thoughtful and accomplished contributors share their thoughts about everything from community building, spirituality, leadership, and life in general, provides us with the opportunity to delve into the multiple facets of character development.

John Naber, an Olympic gold medal winner in swimming, talks about a turning point in his life when he made the choice to publicly admit that he had broken a rule in a 100-meter backstroke race in the 1973 National Swimming Championships. Naber tells us how important it was for him to be held accountable for that choice and how athletes are faced constantly with comparable choices.

Rabbi Joseph Telushkin concentrates on "The Power of Words". What especially struck me was his statement, "In addition to having problems of self-control, many people have never systematically (or even superficially, for that matter) thought through the moral significance of the things they say" (p. 60). He uses an extremely powerful example to make his point, describing when Democrat Tom Turnispeed ran for Congress in 1980 and his Republican oppo-

nent publicized the fact that Turnispeed had an electric shock treatment after a bout with depression.

When Turnispeed responded to this information by attacking his opponent's campaign ethics, Lee Atwater who was directing the Republican campaign (the same Atwater who was George Bush's 1988 campaign director) came back at Turnispeed by saying that he wasn't going to respond to accusations made by a person "hooked up to jumper cables" (p.61). Telushkin says, "what a grotesque violation of privacy and how cruel a public humiliation of another human being! Atwater put into voters' heads a graphic and vicious image with the potential to poison voter's perceptions not only of Turnispeed but of everyone who has had electric shock therapy" (p. 61). His point is that a true test of solid character is when we are willing to think through the implication of our words BEFORE we speak.

Part Two, "Character Role Models", includes essays by Dan Rather, Senator Max Cleland, Marianne Williamson, and Susan Estrich. Cleland gives us the rationale behind the Senate bill to designate a National CHARACTER COUNTS! Week, emphasizing the fact that all of us need to work very hard to instill character and values in our young people. By doing this we will be able

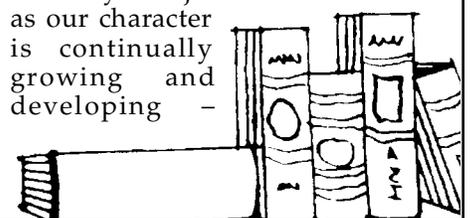
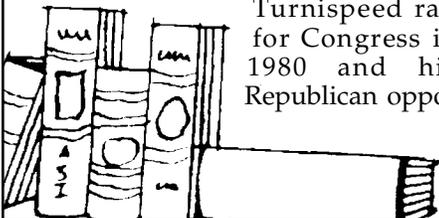
"The fact that each of these thoughtful and accomplished contributors share their thoughts about everything from community building, spirituality, leadership, and life in general, provides us with the opportunity to delve into the multiple facets of character development."

to restore faith not only in individuals, but our country.

Part Three, "Family Matters", is a series of insights into how to develop character in your children. For example, Richard and Linda Eyre in "How to Raise a Kid with Character" bring out six ways to instill character into children of any age, followed by testimonials by their five children attesting to what they think about values and character.

The reader shifts gears once again in Part Four, "Character at Work!" The "Dean of Leadership Gurus" Warren Bennis, in his essay "The Character of Leadership", leads off with the statement that character is the chief attribute of successful leadership. Bennis believes that of all the criteria executives and managers use to evaluate their executives (technical competence, people skills, conceptual

skills, results, taste, judgment, and character) we know the least about judgment and character. Once again he stresses the theme of this book, the idea that our character is constantly evolving. He makes the corollary that just as our character is continually growing and developing -



Leadership Bookshelf

Continued from page 11

“the process of becoming a leader, to me, is much the same process as being an integrated human being” (p.144).

Part Five, “Character in Society”, delves into everything from privacy issues, our moral imagination, community action, public service, and character and freedom. Part Six, “Values and the Meaning of Character”, undoubtedly is the most controversial, thought provoking section of the book. Alan Der-showitz, the Felix Frankfurter Professor at the Harvard Law School, starts off by taking the reader down a path less traveled when he makes the statement – “The truly moral person is the one who does the right thing without any promise of reward or threat of punishment – without engaging in a cost-benefit analysis” (p.273).

College and Character

The John Templeton Foundation’s College and Character Initiative has produced an excellent publication. The Templeton Guide: Colleges that Encourage Character Development profiles 405 exemplary college programs that inspire students to lead ethical and civic-minded lives, as well as 50 college presidents selected for their leadership in this area and 100 colleges named to the Templeton Honor Roll. The Templeton Guide is available for \$16.95. To order a copy call 1-800-621-2736, or go to their website at www.collegeandcharacter.org for further information and online ordering.

This essay is immediately followed by Dennis Prager’s “The Moral Character of Religious and Secular People” in which he states, “The belief in divine reward and punishment has little impact in the day-to-day ethical behavior of most religious people (though, to repeat, we can all wish that it did, because all of us presumably want people to act morally for whatever reason)” (p.279).

After reading these two essays this reader was left scratching her head, asking herself the question – what do I personally believe motivates human behavior, as far as a person’s belief in divine reward and punishment is concerned? (You may have a similar experience).

After considering the multi-dimensional, concrete applications of the injunction “Love your neighbor as yourself”, Rabbi Wayne Dosick asks the reader to consider: how careful are we in bringing God’s standards of ethical behavior into our everyday life, whether it be in a restaurant, our work, or our family life? “Religion and its teachings – just like soap – work only when we use them” (p. 291). In our heart of hearts we know what is right and what is wrong, but we need to constantly ask ourselves the question, why do I do what is wrong?

Charles Colson’s “Knowing What is Right Is Not Enough” makes the reader stop and seriously reflect on what character is all about, considering Colson’s experience of spending seven months in prison on a Watergate-related charge of obstruction of justice while he was serving as special counsel to President Nixon.

This comprehensive collection concludes with two thoughtful and practical essays, one by Daniel Goleman, the author of the best-seller *Emotional Intelligence*, and one

“In our heart of hearts we know what is right and what is wrong, but we need to constantly ask ourselves the question, why do I do what is wrong?”

by Edward Wynne, the principal organizer and editor of “Developing Character, Transmitting Knowledge” (a national statement signed by 27 prominent Americans). Both delve into the specifics of what educators can do to create an environment in which character development can take place.

If you are serious about exploring the vital importance of character development, get this book. Its essayists portray the power of character in such a way that the reader is left empowered to believe more

deeply that he/she does in fact have the power to make choices to develop character in such a way to better one’s own personal life and to work toward building a better world. ▲

Judith Plummer is the Director of Student Activities and Adjunct Assistant Professor of Education at King’s College in Wilkes-Barre, PA.

Core Values

values&visions, a publication from like minded people, offers readers a self-guided journey through 15 core values and critical questions individuals must answer as they develop their personal identity, culminating in a personal mission statement exercise. To find out more about this publication, visit: www.likemindedpeople.com/v&v.html

Scholarship and Research Updates

Character: The Practice of Sound Values

by Susan R. Komives and Felicia C. Mainella

Before educators and leadership scholars continue with discussions centered on the topic of character and leadership, a clear definition of character needs to be provided. Similar to leadership, character is an extremely broad and vague construct that requires clarification. It is often said, "character...is what you are in the dark, when no one's looking" (Kidder, 1998, p. 181). The term character is often used in conjunction with virtue, integrity, ethics, morals, and values. The most common mistake is to view character as an interchangeable concept with personality. Kidder clarifies that character is not just "a set of individual attributes or

qualities by which someone is known" (1998, p. 184) but in a more moral sense, is comprised of both values and behavior.

Rushworth Kidder has a strong body of work worth exploring. The research presented in his book *Shared Values for a Troubled World* (1994; San Francisco: Jossey-Bass) identifies eight values so commonly shared among men and women across many cultures as to be nearly global: "love, truth, freedom, fairness, unity, tolerance, responsibility, and respect for life" (Kidder, 1998, p. 184). Character then is congruently acting on values and moral principle because it is the right thing to do. "True character arises in the practice of sound values" (Kidder, 1998, p. 186).

There are a number of fine books that explore the concept of character. Consider *The Content of America's Character: Recovering Civic Virtue* edited by Don E. Eberly, (1995; Lanham, MD: Madison Books). These chapters focus a great deal on how character is shaped and the role that the various sectors in life have on an individual's character. R. W. Gough's 1998 *Character is Destiny: The Value of Personal Ethics in Everyday Life* (Rocklin, CA: Prima Publishing) connects with Greek origins of ethics and character and explores these principles using such works as Anne Frank's writings. In his 1995 book *On Character* (Washington, DC: The AEI Press), political scientist J. Q. Wilson presents a series of his essays that provide clarification to the concept of character in regards to morality and ethics. J. J. Kupperman's 1991 book *Character* (New York: Oxford University Press) deals with the difference between character and personality with such chapters as: What is Character? Character and Self; Character and Responsibility; Justice and the Virtues; and The Place of Character in Ethics. Also, Jepson School's ethicist, Joanne Ciulla, presents a complex and chal-

lenging analysis of ethics (relating to moral action) in her book *Ethics, the Heart of Leadership* (1998; Westport, CT: Quorum Books).

In "Building the Habitat of Character" from *The Content of America's Character*, Don E. Eberly writes, "In other words, character has cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions. It requires use of the head, the heart, and the hands. The cognitive side supplies the knowledge of right and wrong. The emotional side provides the bridge between personal judgment and responsible action. It includes conscience as well as empathy, which supply the sense of obligation to do something with what you know. To possess and live out good character, the individual must desire the good, must be aware of specific moral qualities that are expected in a character-centered society, and must be able to apply these qualities to concrete cases through rational, moral decision-making" (p. 25).

Various entities have addressed how to explore and develop character in students. The Templeton Foundation (www.templeton.org) has a well-known college and character program. Over 400 various programs are highlighted in their superb publication *College & Character*. In addition, they sponsored a 1999 research report (conducted by Helen Astin and Anthony Antonio from UCLA) that demonstrated the "Impact of College on Character Development". This study found women and African American students to develop more on the dependent measures of civic responsibility, cultural awareness, volunteerism, family values, religious beliefs, and understanding of others. This four year longitudinal study regressed 65 independent variables in blocks and found critical and significant experiences included: interdisciplinary courses, ethnic studies, women's studies, socializing with variety of ethnic and racial students, and participation in leadership training.

New Character Website and E-Journal

CollegeValues.org is a new website devoted exclusively to information and scholarship about moral and civic education in college. The site includes two major resources designed to encourage discussion, research, and educational strategies on character development in college:

The *JOURNAL OF COLLEGE AND CHARACTER* is an electronic peer reviewed journal on character education issues, research, best practices, and application in higher education.

The *CHARACTER CLEARING-HOUSE* provides a national information center for current educational strategies, best practices, leadership efforts, student perspectives, events, and discussion to assist colleges and universities in their efforts to promote moral and civic responsibility.

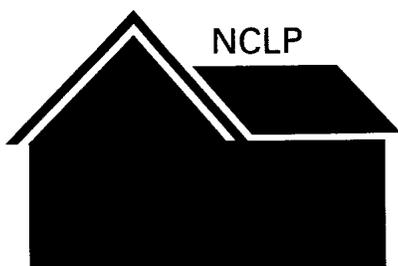
Greg Blimling's "Developing Character in College Students" (*NASPA Journal*, 27(4) Summer 1990) explores issues in moral cognition as well as moral action.

Various other centers and sources offer a range of materials and publications of interest in exploring character, ethics, and leadership. You might review this column in the 1994 *Concepts & Connections* issue on Ethics and Leadership for additional resources. Additionally, the Center for Ethical Leadership has some fine publications such as *Ethical Leadership: In Pursuit of the Common Good* by Center director Bill Grace; located in Seattle, you can contact them at center@ethicalleadership.org or call 206-328-3020. Look to the box on this page for further character resources on the Internet. 🏠

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Dr. Susan R. Komives is Associate Professor of Counseling and Personnel Services and Faculty Associate in the division of Student Affairs at the University of Maryland. She can be reached at 3214 Benjamin Bldg., University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742; (301) 405-2870; sk22@umail.umd.edu; fax (301) 405-9995. She is joined in this column by leadership educator and doctoral student, Felicia Mainella. Mainella's doctoral scholarship has centered on ethics, character and leadership.



Character and Ethics Resources on the Web

The Josephson Institute of Ethics's main site

www.josephsoninstitute.org

and their Character Counts! program

www.charactercounts.org

The Centre for Applied Ethics:

www.ethics.ubc.ca/resources

Character Education Resources

www.charactereducationinfo.org

The John Templeton Foundation College and Character Initiative:

www.collegeandcharacter.org

California University's Character Education Institute:

www.cup.edu/character_ed/default.htm

Ethics Update:

<http://ethics.acusd.edu/index.html>

Institute for the Study of Applied and Professional Ethics at Dartmouth College:

www.dartmouth.edu/artsci/ethics-inst/

Kenan Ethics Program at Duke University:

kenan.ethics.duke.edu

Ohio University's Institute for Applied & Professional Ethics

www.cats.ohiou.edu/ethics

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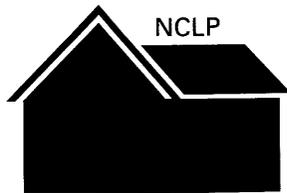
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