

## **Section 2**



# **Virtues: The Gifts of Character**



# How to Use This Section

There are 52 virtues in this section, each containing the following parts:

- What is it?
- Why practice it?
- How do you practice it?
- Signs of Success
- An Affirmation

## Daily Readings

One way to use these five parts is to read one per day in your classroom or over the P.A. system to stimulate awareness of “The Virtue of the Week” Program. See other ideas in the School-wide Activities in “Chapter One: Speak the Language of the Virtues”.

## Discussion and Role Play

The first page of each virtue also contains “What would (the virtue) look like if...?” scenarios. There are two ways to role play these:

- 1) Discuss what the situation would look like if the person were not practicing the virtue. Then have students role play the situation positively showing what it would look like if the virtue were being practiced. Some people believe that role playing is so powerful in internalizing an experience that it is best not to role play the negative situation first, but only to discuss it.
- 2) Alternatively, role playing “before” and “after” the practice of the virtue can be humorous and impress students with the negative consequences of failing to practice a virtue and the positive consequences of doing so.

Each virtue also contains an Activity Page made up of the following:



### **Virtues Activities**

Activities with the virtue – some starter ideas for ways to focus on the virtue in your group or class.



### **Virtues Reflection Questions**

These questions are designed to help students to reflect on the meaning and mastery of the virtues in their own lives and the feelings they experience with or without the practice of the virtue.



### **Drawing the Virtue**

This feature has suggestions for art projects related to the virtue.



### **Poster Points**

These are a list of phrases which students may find useful in creating a poster about the virtue. Of course, they may create their own.

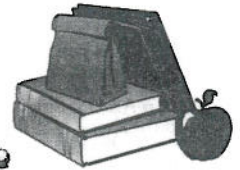


### **Quotable Quotes**

There are at least five quotes for each virtue, one or more of which you may want to hang in your classroom or read aloud each day of the school week. They are intended to inspire students and teachers to practice the virtue.

At the end of Section 2 is a poster of “Virtues: The Gifts of Character” which you may wish to copy or enlarge and have the children color.

# Compassion



## What Is Compassion?

Compassion is having kind feelings toward someone who is hurt or troubled. It is caring deeply and wanting to help, even if you don't know them. It is being kind and forgiving to someone who has hurt you.

## Why Practice It?

When people feel hurt or in trouble, they often feel alone. Feeling alone can make things even worse. Without compassion the world is a hard and lonely place. Being compassionate helps us to feel less alone. Compassion helps us to be understanding of others and ourselves.



## How Do You Practice It?

Compassion begins by noticing when someone seems sad or troubled. Put yourself in their place and ask how you would feel if it were happening to you. Think about how you can help. Take time to listen, and then say kind things like "What are you sad about?" and "How can I help?" Be forgiving when others make mistakes. Be a friend when someone needs a friend.



## What would Compassion look like if...

- Your dog is caught up in his leash?
- A friend is confused about what the teacher said?
- Your mother is sick in the hospital?
- A new student is lonely and feels left out?
- Your father seems really tired after work?
- Your brother's best friend just moved away?

## Signs of Success

Congratulations! You are practicing Compassion when you...

- Notice when someone is hurt or needs a friend
- Imagine how they must be feeling
- Take time to show that you care
- Ask how they are and listen patiently
- Forgive others when they make mistakes
- Do some service to help a person or an animal in need

## Affirmation

*I have compassion. I notice when someone is hurt or needs my help. I take the time to show that I care.*



# Activities with Compassion



## Service Project

- As a group, think of a way to serve people in your community who may be lonely or need some help.
- Look up newspaper articles that show people in need. Decide on a project you can do to help.
- Write a letter to someone who is sick at home



## Virtues Reflection Questions

- What does compassion feel like inside?
- When have you felt compassionate towards someone you didn't know?
- What does it feel like to be lonely?
- Name three ways you can help a new student to feel less lonely?
- What would you do to be helpful and show compassion if your parent were in hospital?



## Drawing Compassion

Draw a picture of a compassionate person helping a person or animal in trouble.



## Poster Points

- My heart is full of compassion.
- Do for others what you would have them do for you.
- I care.



## Quotable Quotes

*"If your compassion does not include yourself, it is incomplete."* Jack Kornfield

*"Walk a mile in my shoes."* Song

*"To 'listen' another's soul into a condition of disclosure and discovery may be almost the greatest service that any human being ever performed for another."* Douglas Steen

*"...no man can live for himself alone."*  
Ross Parmenter

*"[Man] is immortal...because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance."* William Faulkner

*"The individual is capable of both great compassion and great indifference. He has it within his means to nourish the former and outgrow the latter."* Norman Cousins

*"Don't do unto others as you would have them do unto you. They may have different tastes."*  
George Bernard Shaw

*"Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier."* Mother Teresa