

# CHARACTER

Truthfulness

February 2009



**Truthfulness: Habitually telling the truth.**  
**"If it is not right do not do it; if it is not true do not say it."**

*Marcus Aurelius*

Truthfulness is communicating with my life, my words and actions all that is genuine and accurate.

## **Words and Actions must be true.**

Truthfulness builds relationships. When we are consistently true in all that we say and do, then people will begin to trust us. That trust will build stronger relationships. The opposite of this is true as well – when we speak an untruth the relationship is damaged. We must build the relationships we have with other people by walking in truth everyday. Consistency is the key.

Truthfulness must become a habit. We need to constantly be aware of the messages we send out, and ensure that they are true. It is when we act without conscious thought, when we choose truthfulness without thinking of an alternative, that we are really truthful.

## **I Was Only Joking.**

It is deceitful to say I was only joking. When we use this popular phrase, we know in our hearts there is an element of truth in what is said. We may regret saying something and try to cover up by using this phrase. This isn't being truthful in our relationships. If there is a problem, discuss the problem using love, tact, and being truthful.

**Tactfulness-saying or doing the right thing not to offend other people**

Truth is truth- there is no such thing as a small lie, as a half-truth, or a little white-lie. Truth is a 100%!

We can find ourselves in a tricky situation when the truth would appear to be hurtful. We must

remember that honesty is not separate from other character traits. What we need in these tricky situations is tactfulness.

When we live our life with character, we will always be able to do the right thing and consider others. Tactfulness needs three character traits working together, love, compassion, and truthfulness. We must stop and be careful to choose our words wisely.

## **Keeping Promises-our word is our bond.**

We have all been in a social dilemma of having made one social commitment only to receive another far more exciting invitation.

What to do? As always, truthfulness is the route to take. This means keeping our commitments, being true to our word, keeping our promises. It isn't always easy but it is right!

## **Truth Sets Us Free.**

One of the indicators that we have done wrong and need to make amends is our conscience. Our conscience is like a little angel that sits on our shoulder helping make clear the choices between right and wrong.

We must listen to our conscience in all circumstances.

Truthfulness will always be a positive character trait which brings happiness. William Shakespeare wrote in Hamlet:

**"This above all, to thine own self be true; and it must follow as the night the day, thou canst not be false to any man."**

*Anonymous  
Lindon Resident*

**"IF YOU TELL THE TRUTH, YOU DON'T HAVE TO REMEMBER ANYTHING."**

*-Mark Twain*

"Truth is a deep kindness that teaches us to be content in our everyday life and share with the people the same happiness."

*~ Shakespeare*

"Truth is generally the best vindication against slander."

*-Abraham Lincoln*

## Book List

### “A Big Fat Enormous Lie”

by Marjorie Sharmat

### “The Pumpkin Man from Piney Creek”

by Darleen Bailey Beard

### “The Empty Pot”

by Demi



## Family Activities

--Make cookies together. Discuss what would happen if cornstarch were used for baking powder. *If a substituted ingredient looks the same, at what point will the error be discovered?* Thomas B. Macaulay said, "The measure of a man's real character is what he would do if he knew he would never be found out."

--Share accounts of truthful responses in difficult situations.

--Talk about current events. *How important is the truth to solving the problems that are in the news?*

--With a string, make a straight line between Object A and Object B (a few yards apart.) With a second string, start at Object A and weave around several other obstacles before ending at Object B. Have family members walk the string paths with a book balancing on their head. *Telling the truth is like a straight line in geometry. Both are the shortest distance between two points. Discuss the losses of time and resources that may occur as a result of dishonesty.*

--Marian Anderson, an American contralto, was born on February 17, 1902. A famous conductor once praised her voice as one, heard once in a hundred years. Yet, because of racism she was prevented by the Daughters of the American Revolution from performing in the Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C. Eleanor Roosevelt resigned from the DAR in protest. Later, Marian sang before 75,000 people at the Lincoln Memorial. Said Marian Anderson, "There are many persons ready to do what is right because in their hearts they know it is right. But they hesitate, waiting for the other fellow to make the first move and he, in turn, waits for you." *Acting with integrity and being true to principles, as well as being truthful is often difficult, yet frequently our honesty inspires others to be more upright. How can truth be used to dispel prejudice?*

By Laura Clement

## Kid's Corner

I've always thought I was truthful. When my parents or teachers or even friends ask me something, I tell them the truth. But as I have thought about this topic, I realize that there are ways to become more truthful. Sometimes when I don't want to talk on the phone and I say, "tell them I'm not here!" isn't very truthful. Sometimes withholding information that is important to share but I'm not specifically asked about isn't being entirely truthful. And I have told little white lies like, "that looks good on you!" and it doesn't really. Once someone assumed that I was younger than I was and I got in for less money. I didn't say anything because it was so inconvenient to get back in line and have them correct it. But it still is in my memory bothering me and it wasn't worth the money I saved. Living a truthful as possible sets your conscience free.

Natalie, Pleasant Grove High School

We, at Character Connection, would like to focus on helping parents access character materials by using the web site located at [www.lindoncharacterconnection.com](http://www.lindoncharacterconnection.com).

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