

CHARACTER

Connection



INTEGRITY

APRIL 2011

Knowing what's right and acting accordingly.

"Honesty is telling the truth. Integrity is doing what we say we will do."

–Stephen R. Covey

Integrity - "The most important persuasion tool you have in your entire arsenal is integrity." Many have written on the topic of integrity, but if you read or watch the news, integrity seems to be a trait that many people have forgotten. We have all heard Abraham Lincoln's nickname, "Honest Abe." But how many of us know how he received it.

Noah Brooks wrote a short story called "Why Lincoln Was Called 'Honest Abe.'" He begins, "In managing the country store, as in everything that he undertook for others, Lincoln did his very best. He was honest, civil, ready to do anything that should encourage customers to come to the place, full of pleasantries, patient, and alert.

On one occasion, finding late at night, when he counted over his cast, that he had taken a few cents from a customer more than was due, he closed the store, and walked a long distance to make good the deficiency.

At another time, discovering on the scales in the morning a weight with which he had weighed out a package of tea for a woman the night before, he saw that he had given her too little for her money. He weighed out what was due, and carried it to her, much to the surprise of the woman, who had not known that she was short in the amount of her purchase.

Innumerable incidents of this sort are related of Lincoln, and we should not have space to tell of the alertness with which he sprang to protect defenseless women from insult, or feeble children from tyranny; for in the rude community in which he lived, the rights of the defenseless were not always respected as they should have been. There were bullies then, as now."

Abraham Lincoln became an advocate for the underdog and oppressed, and it started with his personal integrity.

Professional racquetball player Reuben Gonzolas became a champion, while losing the final match of his first professional tournament, by refusing to forfeit his personal integrity. "A while back, there was a story about Reuben Gonzolas who was in the final match of a professional racquetball tournament. He was playing the perennial champion for his first shot

at a victory on the pro circuit. At match point in the fifth and final game, Gonzolas made a super "kill shot" into the front corner to win the tournament. The referee called it good, and one of the linemen confirmed the shot was a winner.

But after a moment's hesitation, Gonzolas turned and declared that his shot had skipped into the wall, hitting the floor first. As a result, the serve went to his opponent, who went on to win the match.

Reuben Gonzolas walked off the court; everyone was stunned. The next issue of a leading racquetball magazine featured Gonzolas on its cover. The lead editorial searched and questioned for an explanation for the first ever occurrence on the professional racquetball circuit. Who could ever imagine it in any sport or endeavor? Here was a player with everything officially in his favor, with victory in his grasp, who disqualifies himself at match point and loses. When asked why he did it, Gonzolas replied, "It was the only thing I could do to maintain my integrity."

New England poet, Robert Frost described two roads leading into a wood –

The Road Not Taken

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth...
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference*

The road of integrity may seem like the 'road less traveled by' in our society; choosing that road will make all the difference for each of us.

Debbie and Lynn Shepherd

Lindon Residents

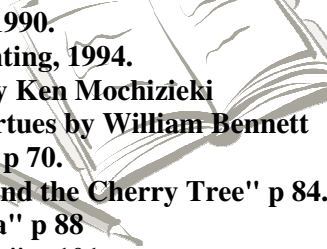


“Resolve to be honest at all events; and if in your own judgment you cannot be an honest lawyer, resolve to be honest without being a lawyer.”
-- Abraham Lincoln

“Be careful how you act. You may be the only Bible people may read.”
--Author Unknown

“There can be no friendship without confidence, and no confidence without integrity.”
--Samuel Johnson

Book List



The Empty Pot, by Demi, 1990.
A Day's Work, by Eve Bunting, 1994.
The Passage to Freedom by Ken Mochizieki
The Children's Book of Virtues by William Bennett
"The Honest Disciple" p 70.
"George Washington and the Cherry Tree" p 84.
"The Indian Cinderella" p 88
"The Honest Woodman" p 101

Family Activities

*Discuss with your family an incident during the day where you were honest.

**GIVE SECOND CHANCES: If a child is dishonest, stop and explain the importance of honesty. Then let the child answer again. Let your praise outweigh the consequences.

** April 18 is the anniversary of Paul Revere's famous 1775 ride. Read the poem about this event by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Talk about the integrity of Paul Revere that inspired people to act on his warning, as opposed to the boy who cried, "Wolf." Talk about the integrity of those who fought in the Revolutionary War and were willing to die for their beliefs.

Integrity is moral soundness, especially as it is revealed in dealings that test steadfastness to truth, purpose, responsibility, or trust.

**Be honest.*

**Don't deceive, cheat, or steal.*

**Do what you say you'll do.*

**Have courage to do the right thing.*

**Build a good reputation.*

**Be loyal-stand by your family, friends and country.*

Kid's Corner

Integrity means being honest with yourself. It means living up to your own personal standards.

If I want to become a better musician, I might set a goal to practice playing my instrument 30 minutes every night. This means I don't try to take shortcuts or cheat: I know myself. I practice the full 30 minutes, no exceptions.

Setting my own goals and challenging myself to be completely honest in who I am and what I want to become or achieve takes a lot of self-mastery.

For me, dressing appropriately for school, using clean language, doing my homework, putting my full effort into running the track during P.E. and having a good attitude is who I truly am.

Living who I am every day is integrity. William Shakespeare said it best: "To thine own self, be true."

-Jeanette Carter

(Reprinted from Newsletter April 2007)

We, at Lindon Character Connection would like to focus on helping parents access character materials by using the web site located at www.lindoncharacterconnection.com.

Lindon Character Connection is a not-for-profit organization encouraging the enhancement of character development in our community. We are accepting financial support. If you can help please send contributions to:

*Lindon Character Connection
c/o Alpine Foundation*

575 N 100 E

American Fork, UT 84003

(You may also give your donation to any executive board member.)

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