

The 6 Pillars of Character

It is no overstatement to declare that people respect and choose as role models men and women of good moral character. In truth, a healthy society is dependent upon leaders who display qualities of good behavior and habits.

But what constitutes noble character?

The Josephson Institute is an entity devoted to improving the ethical quality of society by changing personal and organizational decision-making and behavior. It believes that, whether at work, at home, or at play “there are basic values that define ethical behavior. These values are not political, religious, or culturally based.” The Institute calls them the Six Pillars of Character, and here they are:

- **Trustworthiness.** Build trust with *integrity* (consistency between beliefs, words and actions), *honesty* (truthfulness, sincerity and candor), *promise-keeping*, and *loyalty* (fidelity to family, friends and country).
- **Respect.** Honor the worth and dignity of all individuals. Treat others the way you would want to be treated. Act courteously, civilly, peaceably, and non-violently. Be tolerant and accepting of differences. Avoid rude, offensive, and abusive words and actions.
- **Responsibility.** Be accountable for your words, actions and attitudes. Exercise self-control. Strive for excellence and self-improvement. Plan ahead. Set a good example for others. Be self-reliant, prudent, proactive, persistent and hard-working.
- **Fairness.** Be consistent, open, and treat all people equitably. Consider all sides and make decisions on the facts without favoritism or prejudice. Play by the rules, avoid careless accusations, and don't take undue advantage of others. Pursue justice and condemn injustice.
- **Caring.** Be kind, compassionate, empathetic, charitable, forgiving and grateful.
- **Citizenship.** Obey laws in good faith. Do your share to improve the well-being of fellow citizens and the community. Protect the environment, volunteer, and participate in the processes of democracy by staying informed and voting.

These are high standards – and they should be. Each of us should strive to meet the tests they set forth – and teach our children.

The results? We are better as individuals, as families, as a company, and as a country.

A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, loving favor rather than silver and gold (Proverbs 22:1 NKJV).

– Beecher Hunter