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# Character Development Word Definitions

## Short Definitions

- **Caring:** To put others before yourself
- **Honesty:** To tell the truth
- **Respect:** To treat others as you would have them treat you
- **Responsibility:** To do what you should
- **Faith:** To trust God

## Long Definitions

- **Caring:** To put others before yourself, to love others, to be sensitive to the well-being of others, to help others.
- **Honesty:** To tell the truth, to act in such a way that you are worthy of trust, to have integrity, to make sure your choices match up with your values.
- **Respect:** To treat others as you would have them treat you, to value the worth of every person including yourself, to be cordial even if you disagree with someone.
- **Responsibility:** To do what you should, to do what is right, to be accountable for your behavior and obligations.
- **Faith:** To develop your relationship with God, to be a seeker of truth, to trust God with your life, to be sure of what you hope for and certain of what you do not see.

## Character Development - What does it mean?

**CARING** - Represented by the color **RED** for love and the heart.

*Love the lord your Go with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and love (**CARE** for) your neighbor as yourself. Luke 10:27*

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**HONESTY** - Represented by the color **BLUE** for true blue truthfulness.

*Better to be poor and **HONEST** than rich and dishonest. No one believes a liar, but everyone respects the words of an **HONEST** man. Proverbs 19:1, 21:28*

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**RESPECT** - Represented by **GOLD** for the golden rule.

*Treat people the same way you want them to treat you. Show proper **RESPECT** to everyone. Matthew 7:12, 1 Peter 2:17*

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**RESPONSIBILITY** - Represented by **GREEN** for our fiscal and environmental responsibilities.

*Each one should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else, for each one should carry (be **RESPONSIBLE** for) his own load. Galatians 6:4-5*

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**FAITH** - Represented by **PURPLE** for the Kingdom of God.

*And with **FAITH** it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. Hebrews 11:16.*

# Character Development - Scripture Verses

## CARING

- Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Philippians 2:3
- “Anyone who takes care of a little child like this is caring for me! And whoever cares for me is caring for God who sent me. Your care for others is the measure of your greatness.” Luke 9:48
- It is good when you truly obey our Lord’s command, “You must love and help your neighbors just as much as you love and take care of yourself.” James 2:8
- Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:32

## HONESTY

- It is a wonder heritage to have an honest father. Proverbs 20:7
- Better to be poor and honest than rich and a cheater. Proverbs 28:6
- An honest answer is like a kiss on the lips. Proverbs 24:26
- As God’s messenger I give each of you God’s warning: Be honest in your estimate of yourselves, measuring your value by how much faith God has given you. Romans 12:3
- Love delights in the truth. 1 Corinthians 13:6
- Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things. Philippians 4:8-9
- The Lord detest lying lips, but he delights in men who are truthful. Proverbs 12:22

# Character Development - Scripture Verses

## RESPECT

- Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Romans 12:10
- Have two goals: wisdom-that is, knowing and doing right and common sense. Don't let them slip away, for they fill you with living energy and bring you honor and respect. Proverbs 3:21-22
- Do to others as you would have them do to you. Luke 6:31

## RESPONSIBILITY

- Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and does not do it sins. James 4:17
- If a man will not work, he shall not eat. 2 Thessalonians 3:10
- The man who plans and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. 1 Corinthians 3:8
- This is what the Lord says: "Maintain justice and do what is right, for my salvation is close at hand and my righteousness will soon be revealed." Isaiah 56:1

## FAITH

- Do not lean on your own understanding, but in all your ways acknowledge him and he will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:4-5
- For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever shall believe in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16
- Since we have such a huge crowd of men of faith watching us from the grandstands, let us trip off anything that slows us down or holds us back, and especially those sins that wrap themselves so tightly around our feet and trip us up; and let us run with patience that particular race that God has set before us. Hebrews 12:1

## Reflections on keeping Character Values Strong

The Character Values of **Caring**, **Honesty**, **Respect** and **Responsibility** are made strong when they are anchored in a biblical framework and Christian understanding. By detaching the four Character Values from the Christian Mission that brings them meaning opens them up to be interpreted in different ways.

This is particularly true when the new highest value of society is the “new tolerance” and when the philosophy of the “new” tolerance has become the highest value of an organization. The “new” tolerance can sometimes be rather intolerant and demand that all other values submit to it. This in turn has the effect of either formally or informally changing the meaning of the YMCA character development values. To keep the mission strong and the Character Values robust we must be at least of this potential. Consider these examples:

- Biblical **Respect** means - to be kind or pleasant even if you disagree with the person or their choices. Respect redefined means - you must accept me, my lifestyle and my choices as equally as valid as yours.
- Biblical **Caring** means - to show compassion on others and to care for them and comfort them when needed. Caring redefined means - accept me, care for me, but don't tell me anything I don't want to hear. In other words keep it to yourself if you do not agree with my moral choices that may have gotten me into this mess.
- Biblical **Responsibility** means - to live up to an objective standard or moral code like hard work, sacrifice, moral purity, honor, etc. Responsibility redefined means - to live up to my own moral code on what I define as hard work, sacrifice, moral purity, horn, etc.
- Biblical **Honesty** means - to be honest in our dealings, to have an honest assessment of ourselves, to speak the truth to others in love. Honesty redefined means - to be honest as best I can but if the cause is worthy the rules can be bent or broken, I will define what honesty means to me, and since there is no objective standard don't you pretend to have any truth for my life.

Frequently, people will say that each of these attributes are common among all the worlds religions and that is what will define them. Yes these themes are thee in most world religions, but they are not necessarily defined with the same rigor in each case.

We hope that the four character values are inspiring and give people a stand to strive for and live up to. We maintain this possibility by constantly defining them and challenging people to live up to hem. And we need to confidently know they are rooted in Christian principles that when they are put into practice build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.