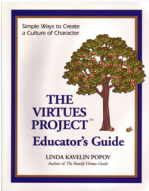




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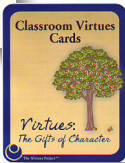
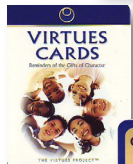
# Virtues Resources for Educators

These are a few of the virtues resources to help awaken the gifts of character



### Virtues Project Educator's Guide

For parents, teachers and counselors to create a culture of character in our schools, day care centers and youth programs. Chapters on each of the Five Strategies of The Virtues Project with methods, examples, and character awakening activities and practices for Grades K - 12. Includes 52 Virtues honored by all cultures and traditions as "the best within us", success stories and sample activities from around the world.



### Virtues Educator's Cards (4" X 5")

This set of 52 cards is designed for use in classroom "Virtues Picks." With illustrations reflecting the cultural and racial diversity of our planet, each card has a brief description of the virtue, signs of success and an affirmation.

### Educator's Wall Cards (CD)

The Wall cards are abbreviated versions of the Virtues in the Educator's Guide in Portable Data Format. They can be viewed on a computer or printed out for use in the classroom as cards or posters.



### Gifts of Character Poster (24" X 36")

This colorful poster lists the 52 virtues found in the Virtues project Educator's Guide. Broadly used in classrooms around the world.

For personal, professional and organizational development and to order Virtues Project materials contact:



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The Virtues Project



## Kinder Kids Safer Schools

by Linda Kavelin Popov



## 10 Questions Caring Educators Ask

## 5 Strategies for Awakening the Gifts of Character



*Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education.*

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.



## Dedication

**This booklet is dedicated to the memory of Alexina Keeling, a teacher who brought hope and healing to troubled teens through the strategies of The Virtues Project. Her steadfast love and hope transformed high risk youth into high aiming leaders.**

The Virtues Project was founded in 1991 by Linda Kavelin Popov, Dr. Dan Popov and John Kavelin. It is a global grassroots initiative that inspires the practice of virtues in everyday life. The Project is a catalyst for the renewal of kindness, justice, and integrity in more than 85 countries and was honored by the United Nations during the International Year of the Family as a “model global program for all cultures”.

The Virtues Project has inspired and mobilized many thousands of families, educators, leaders and employees to commit acts of service and generosity, to heal violence with virtues, and to create safe and caring communities.

The Five Strategies are the signature contribution of The Virtues Project. They are based on the virtues that are universally valued by all people and cultures.

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[www.virtuesproject.com](http://www.virtuesproject.com)

*“When I discover my ‘why’ to live, then my “how” to live will just naturally follow.”*

– JIM PALUCH, AUTHOR

## Virtues: The Gifts of Character

Assertiveness  
Caring  
Cleanliness  
Commitment  
Compassion  
Confidence  
Consideration  
Cooperation  
Courage  
Courtesy  
Creativity  
Detachment  
Determination  
Diligence  
Enthusiasm  
Excellence  
Flexibility  
Forgiveness  
Friendliness  
Generosity  
Gentleness  
Helpfulness  
Honesty  
Honor  
Humility  
Idealism



Integrity  
Joyfulness  
Justice  
Kindness  
Love  
Loyalty  
Moderation  
Modesty  
Orderliness  
Patience  
Peacefulness  
Perseverance  
Purposefulness  
Reliability  
Respect  
Responsibility  
Self-Discipline  
Service  
Tact  
Thankfulness  
Tolerance  
Trust  
Trustworthiness  
Truthfulness  
Understanding  
Unity



## The Five Strategies

**These strategies help us to live more authentic, purposeful lives, to raise children of compassion and idealism, and create a culture of character in our schools and communities.**

### Strategy 1: Speak the Language of Virtues

Language has the power to discourage or to inspire. Using virtues to acknowledge, guide, correct and thank awakens the best within us.

**Learning Activity:** Have staff and students create a virtues profile poster, showing Strength Virtues and Growth Virtues, including a short story, poem, pictures, or favorite quotation.

### Strategy 2: Recognize Teachable Moments

Recognizing the virtues needed in daily challenges helps us to become lifelong learners open to the lessons of character.

**Learning Activity:** Invite students to describe both the Strength Virtues and Growth Virtues of characters in stories and history lessons and connect these virtues to their own lives.

### Strategy 3: Set Clear Boundaries

Boundaries based on respect and restorative justice create a climate of peace, cooperation, and safety in our homes, schools and communities.

**Learning Activity:** Refine the school Vision Statement annually and express it through the visual and performing arts. Make a short, simple, easy to memorize virtues-based slogan.

### Strategy 4: Honor the Spirit

We sustain our vision and purpose by integrating virtues into our activities, surroundings, celebrations and the arts.

**Learning Activity:** Pick a Virtue Card to start the day, begin a meeting, end the week, or use when problem-solving with students, and at special times in Sharing Circles.

### Strategy 5: Offer Companionship

Being deeply present and listening with compassionate curiosity guides others to find clarity and to create their own solutions. It supports healing and growth.

**Learning Activity:** When anyone has strong feelings, ask *what* and *how* questions that empower students to get to the heart of the matter. Support students to tap their own wisdom to resolve the situation. End with a Virtues Acknowledgment

## Introduction

What first attracted you to become a teacher? For most, it is a heartfelt desire to make a difference in the lives of children and youth. True educators hold hope for a better world. They contribute to the two abiding goals of education -- to help students become smart and to help them become good.

Schools today face enormous challenges, with rising student violence and armed guards at the doors. The need for dedicated, idealistic and hopeful teachers has never been greater. Creating a school culture of caring, character and inclusiveness is essential.

### From Violence to Virtues

In this multi-media world, children are bombarded by sounds and images of violence merged with heroism and celebrity. Bullying, both physical and psychological, is a constant challenge even in our best schools. What can we do to turn the tide?

Studies show that violence is a symptom, and meaninglessness is the disease. All cultures and beliefs teach that the meaning of life springs from the virtues of our character, such as respect, compassion, excellence and service.

### Awakening Idealism

Cultivating the virtues of our character is a lifelong process. From ages 12 to 24, a strong emerging virtue is Idealism – the need to make a meaningful difference, to make one’s mark, to be somebody, to develop a sense of personal power. When there is a failure of hope, or misplaced value on the use of power, that idealism can turn into violence.

You can help transform bullies into leaders, by showing students who they really are, and inspiring their natural idealism. They need people in their lives who hold a vision of what is possible. Be a vision keeper. Your positive thoughts, words and feelings are the best investment in their future.



Power  
+ Control  
= Violence

Power  
+ Responsibility  
+ Compassion  
= Leadership

*Linda Kavelin Popov*

CO-FOUNDER, THE VIRTUES PROJECT



# 10 Questions Caring Educators Ask

**“You are not here to merely make a living. You are here in order to enable the world to live more amply, with greater vision, with a finer spirit of hope and achievement. You are here to enrich the world, and you impoverish yourself if you forget the errand.”**

– WOODROW WILSON

## 1. How can I make a positive difference in the lives of my students?

Authentic self-esteem comes from good character, and virtues are the content of character. Speaking Virtues Language to acknowledge, guide and correct students tells them they are good people capable of giving their best.

**Tip #1:** Catch them in the act of committing a virtue, and name it: *“It took courage to go on that high slide for the first time.” “Good determination with that math assignment.”*

## 2. If I use Virtues Language, won't students become dependent on praise?

There is a great difference between praise and a Virtues Acknowledgment. Generic praise such as *“Good girl!”* or *“I'm proud of you!”* breeds people-pleasing. Acknowledging a virtue builds capacity. It makes their choices and actions the reference point, rather than outside approval.

**Tip #2:** Help students see their Strength Virtues and also work on their Growth Virtues. With a student who is easily distracted say, *“You were purposeful today in getting down to work.”* With a student who often has the answers, acknowledge their Humility or Consideration in sometimes stepping back to give others a chance.

## 3. How can I keep from shaming children when I correct them?

Turn difficult behaviors into Teachable Moments by calling for a specific virtue. This approach tells them they are capable of better, eliminates the negative impact of sarcasm and disrespect, and conveys the meaning of the desired behavior.

**Tip #3:** Focus on the act, not the actor. Tell them what you **do** want, not what you **don't** want. *“James, if you want to stay in class, you need to be peaceful now.”* Acknowledge any improvement. *“James, you've been more peaceful today -- two arguments instead of seven!”*

## 4. What can I do when a student pushes my buttons?

We all have things that irritate us, and kids have excellent radar. Find something you enjoy or appreciate about the student, and comment on it. Even acknowledging their creativity in pushing your buttons might be a start.

**Tip #4:** When you give a Virtues Correction and the student shows anything remotely like cooperation, thank them for it. This can dispel the power struggle and improve the relationship.

## 5. What is the Virtues approach to discipline when a Virtues Correction doesn't work?

School-wide discipline based on restorative justice works best. Make consequences educative instead of punitive. Give “Reflection Time” rather than detention. Copy one of the Virtues pages from The Virtues Project Educators Guide. Students read it, rewrite the incident as if they had used the virtue, then create a plan to make amends.

**Tip #5:** Have students set a goal to work on a Growth Virtue, creating a visual such as footprints leading to a soccer ball. *“My Growth Virtue is Self-Discipline to turn in homework. (Steps): Finish by 7 PM; Put in my backpack before I go to bed; Hand it in right away.”* Acknowledge every success.

## 6. How can I add character education to my already full academic plate?

Virtues strategies are not an add-on curriculum. They are tools to help you more effectively handle what is already on your plate. When you use encouraging language and virtues-based discipline, students feel better and work harder.

**Tip #6:** Take time yearly to create a Shared Vision of how your class wants to treat each other. Together, create a slogan and poster, using 2 to 4 virtues. E.g., *“We are peace-makers. We don't put each other down. We lift each other up. We show respect for each other and our school at all times.”*

## 7. How can I help a bully become a leader?

Your influence is in direct proportion to the quality of your relationship, even with the most troubled student. Let them know you believe they can turn themselves around by using their obvious power to become a leader of Responsibility, Compassion and Respect.

**Tip #7:** Engage them in an activity that builds self esteem such as music, math or sports. Be their mentor and cheerleader. Acknowledge them when they use their power kindly and responsibly.

## 8. What is the best way to respond to a student's anger or resistance in a disciplinary situation?

Become a world-class listener. The secret is to ask non-judgmental open-ended questions starting with *“What?”* and *“How?”* *“What's your point of view about what happened?”* *“What's not fair?”* *“Why?”* puts them on the defensive. *“What?”* helps them to get to the heart of the matter.

**Tip #8:** With boys especially, walking shoulder to shoulder somehow gets them talking more than sitting face to face. After they talk about what happened, help them identify a virtue they could have used to create a better result.

## 9. How do I respond in a helpful way to grief and loss in our school or community?

When anyone has trauma or grief, we need two things: compassionate presence and the freedom to talk about it as often as we need to, without being “talked out of it”. Companionship is a simple and powerful tool in this process.

**Tip #9:** It can be very healing to sit with others in a Sharing Circle with receptive silence and no interruption, to share feelings and thoughts. When each person finishes sharing, others give a Virtues Acknowledgment, such as Caring or Courage. This is deeply restorative.

## 10. How can we create a culture of caring and character in our schools?

We are all multi-sensory learners. Hearing and speaking Virtues Language, daily P.A. readings on the Virtue of the Week or Month, virtues posters and bulletin boards, Assembly skits and songs, and a virtues-based discipline system, can transform the culture and build a strong sense of community.

**Tip #10:** Assign a class to lead the Virtue activity for each Assembly by creating a video, a skit or a school song.