

THE VIRTUES

A SUGGESTED ARRANGEMENT OF VIRTUES ACCORDING TO AGE

This table and the following definitions have been taken from David Isaac's book, "Character Building".

Note that we are continually educating in virtue; many virtues are interconnected. This table shows the key virtues that parents tackle and should develop in the different age ranges in order to raise happy, mature adults.

| | Up to Age 7 | From 8 – 12 | From 13-15 | From 16-18 |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Predominant Cardinal Virtue | Justice | Fortitude | Temperance | Prudence |
| Principal Theological Virtue | | Charity | Faith | Hope |
| Key Human Virtues | Obedience Sincerity Orderliness | Fortitude Perseverance Industriousness Patience Responsibility Justice Generosity | Modesty Moderation Sociability Friendship Respect for Others Simplicity Patriotism | Prudence Flexibility Understanding Loyalty Audacity Humility Optimism |
| RESULT | HAPPINESS AND | HUMAN | MATURITY | AS ADULTS |

DEFINITIONS OF VIRTUES:

AUDACITY – An audacious person sets out on and completes courses of action which may appear imprudent, convinced—after calm assessment of the facts and taking account of possible risks—that he can achieve a genuine good. (This is a good kind of daring).

FLEXIBILITY – A person who is flexible adapts his behavior readily to the particular circumstances of each individual or situation, but without thereby abandoning his own personal principles of behavior.

FORTITUDE – In situations which make it difficult to improve, a courageous person resists harmful influences, withstands difficulties and strives to act positively to overcome obstacles and undertakes great deeds.

FRIENDSHIP – Through friendship a person, who already knows certain other people through shared interests in work or leisure, has regular personal contact with them which stems from mutual rapport-- each interesting himself in the other person and in his improvement.

GENEROSITY – A generous person acts unselfishly and cheerfully for the benefit of others, conscious of the value of his help and despite the fact that it may cost him an effort.

HUMILITY – A humble person recognizes his own inadequacy, qualities and abilities, and presses them into the service, doing good without attracting attention or expecting the applause of others.

INDUSTRIOUSNESS – An industrious person does diligently those things especially essential to the achievement of supernatural and natural maturity, and helps others to do the same, in everyday work and in the fulfillment of one's other duties.

JUSTICE – A just person strives constantly to give others what is their due, so that they can fulfill their duties and exercise their rights as persons (the right to life, to cultural and moral goods, to material goods), as parents, as children, as citizens, as workers, as rulers, etc. -- and he also tries to see that others do likewise.

LOYALTY – A loyal person accepts the bonds implicit in his relationship with others—friends, relatives, superiors, his country, its institutions, etc. -- so that, as he goes on, he defends and reinforces the system of values which these represent.

MODERATION – A person who is moderate distinguishes between what is reasonable and what is self-indulgent and makes reasonable use of his senses, his time, his money, his efforts

and so on, in accordance with true and upright principles.

MODESTY - A modest person recognizes the value of his own privacy and respects that of others. He protects his privacy from the gaze of others; he rejects anything which might encroach upon it and realizes this practice only in circumstances which can be of benefit to him or others.

OBEDIENCE – An obedient person accepts as his own decisions those which come from whoever holds and expresses authority, provided they do not go against justice, and he carries out promptly what has been decided, striving faithfully to interpret the will of him who commands.

ORDERLINESS – An orderly person follows a logical procedure which is essential for the achievement of any goal he sets himself—in organizing his things, using his time, carrying out his activities on his own initiative, without having to be constantly reminded.

OPTIMISM – An optimist has confidence, based on reason, in his own abilities, in the help which he can obtain from others and in the ability of others; thus in every situation, he can identify, first of all, the positive elements and the opportunities for improvement which it offers and, secondly, the difficulties and obstacles in the way of such improvement; he takes advantage of everything favorable and faces up to the rest in a sportsmanlike and cheerful manner.

PATIENCE – A patient person bears present difficulties calmly, in a situation where he senses some difficulty or some good which is difficult to achieve.

PATRIOTISM – A patriotic person recognizes what his country has given him and is giving him. He pays it due honor and service, thereby supporting and defending the values it stands for, while also making his own the noble aspirations of every country in the world.

PERSEVERANCE – Once his decision is made, a persevering person takes the steps necessary to achieve the goal he has set himself, in spite of internal or external difficulties, and despite anything which might weaken his resolve in the course of time.

PRUDENCE – In his work and in dealings with other people the prudent person gathers information which he assesses in the light of right standards: he weighs the favorable and unfavorable consequences for himself and others prior to taking a decision and then he acts or refrains from acting, in keeping with the decision he has made.

RESPECT FOR OTHERS – A person who has respect for others acts or refrains from acting so as not to harm, and indeed so as to benefit, himself and others, according to their rights, status and circumstances.

RESPONSIBILITY – A responsible person accepts the consequences of his actions, be they

intentional (resulting from decisions taken or accepted) or unintentional, so that others either benefit as much as possible, or at least, do not suffer. He is also concerned that others over whom he has any influence should act similarly.

SIMPLICITY – A simple person ensures that his normal ways of acting—his speech, the way he dresses, the way he behaves—is consistent with what his real motives are; he allows other people to know him accurately: he is what he seems.

SINCERITY – A sincere person makes full disclosure, where appropriate, to the right person and at the right time, of anything he has done, seen, thought or felt with regard to his own or another's situation. **SOCIABILITY** – The sociable person makes good use of and discovers ways of getting together with other people; he manages to communicate with them through the genuine interest he shows in them, in what they say, in what they do, in what they think and feel.

UNDERSTANDING – An understanding person recognizes the various factors which influence feelings or behavior; he studies each of these factors and how they relate to one another (and encourages other people to do the same), and in his behavior he takes these factors into account.