

Enthusiasm

Character... It starts with me!

MONTHLY EDUCATOR BULLETIN

Vs. Apathy

I WILL:

- be an energy-giver
- smile
- treat every job as important
- put my whole heart into what I do
- not be discouraged by failure

FEATURES

- Quotes 2
- Curriculum Connection 2
- Model 3
- Team-Building 3
- Crosky's Corner 5
- Character in the Classroom Continuously 7

Expressing joy in each task as I give it my BEST effort

Several years ago, Oak Hills High School had a Respect Day that was totally planned and orchestrated by the Senior Class. They started the day by enthusiastically greeting the rest of the student body, staff and faculty as they entered the building. They cheered, clapped, shook hands, and handed out business card size notes with greetings and positive

messages, to make each person feel welcome. The response from the receiving students was amazing. They felt like celebrities. What was even more amazing is how the students in the senior class felt being that enthusiastic. It was a win-win for everyone!

Wouldn't it be great to have your own set of personal cheerleaders to cheer you on in even your most mundane

tasks? So why not turn it around this month and be the person in the room who brings the enthusiasm!



Entusiasmo

vs. Apatía

Mostrar gozo en cada tarea haciendo el mejor de mis esfuerzos



Go to the Root

The word Enthusiasm comes from combining the Greek preposition *en* meaning "in, at or on" with *theos*, which means god. Can you see how being filled with a divine spirit could make one enthusiastic?



IN THIS ISSUE

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Whistle While you Work | 4 |
| Two Frogs in Cream | 4 |

“People will accept your idea much more readily if you tell them Benjamin Franklin said it first.” -David H. Comins

Character Quotables

“The real secret of success is enthusiasm”

~Walter Chrysler

“Every great and commanding moment in the annals of the world is the triumph of some enthusiasm.”

~Ralph Waldo Emerson

“I have a dream!”

~Martin Luther King

“Life is too short to be little. Man is never so manly as when he feels deeply, acts boldly, and expresses himself with frankness and with fervor.”

~Benjamin Disraeli

“I want to preach, not the doctrine of ignoble ease, but the doctrine of the strenuous life.”

~Theodore Roosevelt

“Enthusiasm moves the world.”

~Arthur James Balfour

“Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm.”

~Winston Churchill

“I know of no single formula for success. But over the years I have observed that some attributes of leadership are universal and are often about finding ways of encouraging people to combine their efforts, their talents, their insights, their enthusiasm and their inspiration to work together.”

~Queen Elizabeth II

“There is a real magic in enthusiasm. It spells the difference between mediocrity and accomplishment.”

~Norman Vincent Peale

“The secret of genius is to carry the spirit of the child into old age, which mean never losing your enthusiasm.”

~Aldous Huxley

“Nobody grows old merely by living a number of years. We grow old by deserting our ideals. Years may wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul.”

~Samuel Ullman

“Enthusiasm is the yeast that makes your hopes shine to the stars. Enthusiasm is the sparkle in your eyes, the swing in your gait. The grip of your hand, the irresistible surge of will and energy to execute your ideas.”

~Henry Ford

“When you discover your mission, you will feel its demand. It will fill you with enthusiasm and a burning desire to get to work on it.”

~W. Clement Stone

“Enthusiasm is not the same as just being excited. One gets excited about going on a roller coaster. One becomes enthusiastic about creating and building a roller coaster.”

~Bo Bennett

“If you aren't fired with enthusiasm, you will be fired with enthusiasm.”

~Vince Lombardi

“A mediocre idea that generates enthusiasm will go further than a great idea that inspires no one.”

~Mary Kay Ash

“A man can succeed at almost anything for which he has unlimited enthusiasm.”

~Charles Schwab

Curriculum Connection History

As a child, Theodore Roosevelt was often sick. One day his father decided to put him on an exercise program in hopes of strengthening him to fight the germs. He was a weak child and it took him a long time to build his muscles but he put his whole heart into exercising and weight lifting. Soon he had the stamina to play outside and keep up with the other boys. He went on to lead the Rough Riders, a group of volunteer soldiers recruited to attack the Spanish at San Juan Heights. Roosevelt was now known for his energy and enthusiasm in leading his troops in battle. As the 26th President of the United States, Roosevelt became known to many for his cheerful smile, energetic personality and whole-hearted enthusiasm.



Hannah Taylor - Model of Enthusiasm

When Hannah was 5, she saw a man eating out of a garbage can and was immediately filled with sadness and questions. "Why, why, why?" she asked. Where society sees a problem, Hannah sees a person.

By 8, Hannah had founded The Ladybug Foundation Inc., a registered charity, and had become the innocent face of the homeless, seeing their plight with the clarity of a child and speaking out for them across Canada, and elsewhere in the world. She has spoken to one person at a time and to groups as large as 16,000. She has visited more than 175 schools, organizations and events. Hannah believes that

everyone deserves a roof over their head and enough food to eat, as basic human rights.

Through Hannah's efforts, well over 3 million dollars has been raised directly and indirectly to assist projects across Canada providing shelter, food and safety for homeless people.

Now, we all know that a 5 year old or an 8 year old does not have the business skills to successfully raise awareness or create charities but Hannah had such a passion and enthusiasm for what she believed in that she was able to achieve these goals.



For more information on Hannah visit:

<http://www.ladybugfoundation.ca/>

Team~Building Activity

Building a culture of good character requires building the class into a community. Here is this month's teambuilding activity:

Tarp Hole

To prepare for this activity, get an old tarp or an old blanket and cut several holes in it. You will also need a ball, smaller than the holes that you cut. Have the students stand around the outside of the tarp and each hold onto the edge. Have them step outwards so that there is tension on the tarp. Place the ball on the tarp with the instructions that they need to work together to not let the ball fall through the holes or roll off of the tarp. They can talk to each other but ultimately they must all work together to keep the ball from falling through the holes. For an older class, you may want to add a second ball if they are good with only one. For a younger class, you may want to not have any holes and their goal be to keep it from falling off the tarp. If your tarp is not large enough for your whole class you may want to time how long each group can keep it rolling.

When you are done, discuss how everyone had to work together to achieve the goal.



Whistle while you work

Start this activity by having the students list chores that they do not like to do such as cleaning the toilet or taking out the garbage. After you have several tasks listed, discuss how the slaves (or the 7 Dwarfs for younger students) would sing while they worked to make the task seem lighter. Challenge them to take a simple known song and change the words to fit the task. Give an example in class such as "Mary had a toilet brush, toilet brush, toilet brush. Mary had a toilet brush that made the throne all clean". Ask them to pick a task during the coming week that they are not very fond of doing and write a "ditty" of their own about it. Make sure that they know it will be shared with the class. You can select a tune that they all must use or allow them to use one of their own. Take a vote on whether or not singing made the task go more quickly or not. Ask if they had any reactions from family members as they sang while they worked.



Two Frogs In Cream

*Two frogs fell into a can of cream,
Or so I've heard it told:
The sides of the can were shiny and steep,
The cream was deep and cold.
"O, what's the use?" croaked Number 1.
"Tis fate; no help's around.
Good-bye, my friends Good-bye, sad world"
And weeping still, he drowned.
But Number 2, of sterner stuff,
Dog-paddled in surprise,
The while he wiped his creamy face
And dried his creamy eyes.
"I'll swim awhile, at least," he said-
Or so I've heard he said:
"It really wouldn't help the world
If one more frog were dead."
An hour or two he kicked and swam,
Not once he stopped to mutter.
But kicked and kicked and swam and kicked.
Then hopped out, via butter!*

Author Unknown

Use this poem to illustrate the need for positive thinking. After reading it, you can demonstrate the making of butter. Label a mason jar or old mayo jar Enthusiasm and fill it half-full with room temperature heavy whipping cream. You can make this go faster by adding a marble or culturing the cream first by adding a few teaspoons of cultured yogurt or sour cream. Pass the jar around and let each student shake it. It will take anywhere from 10 - 30 minutes to form butter. Don't stop when it looks like whip cream. The butter will form and separate from the buttermilk that remains, if any. Drain the buttermilk off, stir in a pinch of salt and enjoy on crackers. You will make half as much butter as the cream with which you started. It should taste delicious, slightly sour, with no aftertaste. If it is bubbly, or smells yeasty or gassy, discard. You may need more than 1 jar depending on your class size.

For a website that is kid-friendly science on butter making go to:

<http://pbskids.org/zoom/activities/sci/butter.html>

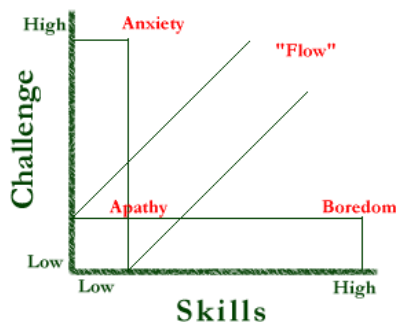
For an interactive version of Two Frogs in Cream go to:

<http://homepages.rootsweb.com/~george/twofrogs.html>

Have you ever lost track of time? On an ideal summer afternoon (which seems to be rare this year!), you might experience this. You get engrossed in a leisurely activity in which your focus is pretty much solely on what you are doing. You are oblivious to your surroundings. Or, you are a video gamer and you get completely involved in the game as you reach Level 257, the farthest you've ever gone. Or maybe you are a runner; you fight through the heat or the rain and really achieve a pace and momentum which feels great. You feel like you could run forever. We call it a "runner's high." Perhaps you are an artist or crafter. You find a project which occupies your whole mind. Once you get into it, you are full of passion, gone from this reality. We say that you are "in the zone." Perhaps music does that to you. Heck, it can even happen in a job for which you are paid. What I am trying to picture for you is a mental state of operation in which a person performing an activity is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus, full involvement, and enjoyment in the process of the activity. This is a state which the psychologist Mihály Csíkszentmihályi (pronounced, according to him, as "chicks send me high") refers to as "*Flow*."

Croskey's Corner

When we find an activity which allows us to achieve a state of *Flow*, we can express joy in the task as we give it our best effort. This last is a definition of the Character Quality of the Month for July, Enthusiasm. The opposite of Enthusiasm is Apathy. Csíkszentmihályi has aspects of his *Flow* theory which explain Apathy and its relationship to Enthusiasm. The chart below may help you picture it.



Many of life's tasks can be thought of on two spectrums: one is a range from Low Challenging to Medium Challenging to Highly Challenging. The other spectrum offers a path from tasks which require Little Skill to those which require a Medium amount of Skill to those which demand that we be Highly Skilled.

There are, thus, four combinations of Skill and Challenge.

1. You can be faced with a Highly Challenging task for which you are only slightly skilled. For me, this would be playing a round of golf. That state can create Anxiety for you as you are overwhelmed.

Bill Croskey is a school psychologist from the Loveland City Schools

2. Or, you can face a situation where you find that task is not up to the skill level you possess and is therefore not challenging. This might describe

LeBron James playing on a Third grade basketball team. That creates a feeling of Boredom.

3. At another time you might be in a situation where your skills are low and the challenge is low; that is Csikszentmihályi's definition of Apathy. This is my situation in a very simple video game. I have low skills but also the game is very simple. I am Apathetic toward the task and the challenge.

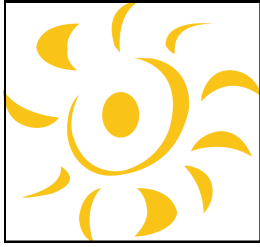
Croskey's Corner

So, there are High Skill-Low Challenge situations (Boredom); Low Skill-High Challenge situations (Anxiety); and Low Skill-Low Challenge situations (Apathy).

4. Finally, the ideal is a situation where your skills are rather evenly matched with the challenge level of the task. You are invigorated by the task because it seems difficult but worth the effort. You are well placed to achieve a state of *Flow*. I would suggest that Enthusiasm follows naturally with *Flow*.

OK, Character lessons can often feel like sermons or demands that we will ourselves to be "good." I am suggesting that practicing the Character Quality of Enthusiasm is more a matter of choosing situations which will offer the possibility of achieving a state of *Flow*. If you are in a situation which promises to leave you Apathetic, or Bored, or Anxious, you might well have difficulty achieving a GENUINE feeling of Enthusiasm. The Character Council is not wishing that there will be a lot of Greater Cincinnatians wandering around town pretending to enjoy something they hate. So, instead, try a new activity or task. But instead of pretending to find it interesting, try to find the part of it where your skills match the challenge. You will have a better chance of achieving that state we call *Flow*. And your Enthusiasm is more likely to be honest.

Bill Croskey is a retired school
psychologist from the Loveland
City Schools



The Character Council of Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky

P.O. Box 33144
Cincinnati, Ohio 45233

Mary Andres Russell, Executive Director

E-mail: mrussell@charactercincinnati.org

www.charactercincinnati.org

Written by Jill Tomey,
Character Education Consultant

© 2017 Character Council of Greater Cincinnati &
Northern Kentucky

The 49 Character Qualities are adapted from Character First! materials and are used with permission.

Use of external website links in our articles does not imply endorsement of the site, its content or the views and opinions of the external Web site's sponsoring organization. Please use your own discretion when using material from these links.

Character...It Starts With Me!

Character in the Classroom *Continuously*

There are many ways that you can teach the Character Quality of Month. Here are just a few suggestions:

- Ask students to make posters to hang in the classroom or around the school.
- Challenge students to find quotes, news stories, current (or classic) songs or movies that portray the character quality of the month. Be sure to share these with the class and “archive” these to use in future years.
- Add the character trait of the month to the spelling word list. (Even if it is posted in the classroom to copy!)
- Offer for students to make a video or write a rap that demonstrates the Character Quality of the Month.
- If you teach younger students, see if you can “borrow” some older students to lead your students in an activity or switch the roles and have the younger students “teach” a rhyme to the older students.
- If you teach older students, you can be the initiator in the previous activities.
- Invite local business leaders or small business owners to talk about the importance of a character trait. If you teach older students, aim to get a representative from a business that typically hires teens so that they can relate the importance of good character when applying for and *keeping* a job.
- Men and women in uniform usually make impressive guest speakers. Police departments, fire departments and military recruiting offices are usually willing to come into a classroom. Do not be afraid to give them specific requests or guidelines for speaking so that it is pertinent to the lessons of the month.
- Always have a generic character activity planned and ready to go that you can use as filler when you have time to kill or that a substitute teacher can use in your absence.