



"Tolerance does not lower the standards of good character in order to make everyone more acceptable."

-Character First

What is Tolerance?

"Tolerance comes from the Latin word "tolerare," which means "to bear." In other words, a person bears with one who is irritating or shows great weakness. Being tolerant means a person doesn't require perfection. He recognizes that people are at different levels of maturity and gives them room to grow, yet he doesn't weaken his own standards. By taking this position, a tolerant person can encourage others to move toward a higher standard.

A tolerant person avoids judging a person by appearance, but seeks to value them by listening and gaining understanding of their inner motivations. He seeks to understand individuals for their own qualities, pushing past group stereotypes and outward appearances. He avoids measuring the worth of a person by factors, such as a handicap or rough family background, that are beyond that person's control.

A tolerant person takes time to evaluate a situation carefully before speaking. He often uses that time to measure his own behavior by that of the one who is irritating to him, knowing that irritations often reveal our own blind spots.

Tolerance

vs. prejudice

"Accepting others at different levels of maturity."

I will:

- ◆ not confuse what is right with what is popular.
- ◆ expect the same of myself as I expect of others.
- ◆ look for ways to help others mature.
- ◆ accept my own unchangeables and the unchangeables of others.
- ◆ listen before I form an opinion.

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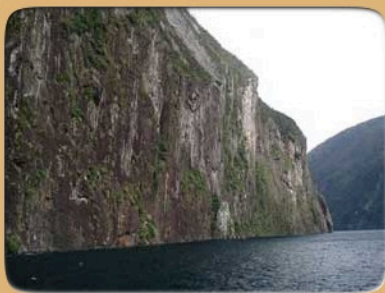
Talk about Tolerance

1. Do you remember a time when someone was tolerant of your mistakes? How did that affect you?
2. What hinders you from being tolerant when someone is irritating to you?
3. Have you ever "dug your heels in" when there was a dispute, only to find out you were wrong? How could you avoid that in the future?
4. How can you reconcile the apparent contradiction of keeping a high standard, yet extending tolerance to a person who falls short of it?
5. Can you describe a time when you began to understand a difficult person? How did that happen? What resulted?

"Tolerance comes with age. I see no fault committed that I myself could not have committed at some time or other."
--Goethe

WORK IN PROGRESS
SORRY FOR ANY
INCONVENIENCE
CAUSED

Applying tolerance can ultimately build team excellence. By using mistakes as steps to learning and to gaining better understanding of each other, a sense of real teamwork emerges!



Unchangeables

Tolerance accepts the aspects of a person that are unchangeable and avoids discrimination on that basis. However, a person's character is within his ability to change and a tolerant person will expect and help others to grow in good character.

What are some unchangeables?

- race
- place of birth
- physical features
- handicaps
- age
- family history
- gender
- IQ and talents

Building Tolerance

- ✧ Look past the surface to the heart.
- ✧ Give people room to make mistakes, remember that all mistakes can bring learning and growth.
- ✧ Use irritation with others to examine yourself for blind spots.
- ✧ Be sure the standards you apply are well-proven ones, not just your opinions--remember, you could be wrong!
- ✧ Develop skills to understand a person's heart:
 - ◆ remember their words or actions may not reveal their heart.
 - ◆ ask insightful questions to find out their inner motivations.
 - ◆ Use the attitude and expression, "Help me understand...."
 - ◆ Rephrase their statements with, "Are you saying...?" to gain a better understanding of their words.
- ✧ Be a peace-maker, choosing to live in peace even while others are irritating.
- ✧ Never mock or devalue another.
- ✧ Remember--humility breeds tolerance!

For more on this quality...

- visit "[Just for Kids](#)"

- see the [Resource list](#)

- visit www.characterfirst.com

Parents - [Click here](#) for tips on encouraging your children to develop the character quality this month.

Check out the [Just for Kids](#) pages for a nature analogy and a historical lesson.