



Tolerance

or, 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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What is Tolerance?

The word tolerance comes from a Latin word tolerare, meaning "to bear." In other words, a person who is tolerant bears another person's weakness or irritation.

Tolerance doesn't mean changing what you know to be wrong to seem to be right. It does mean to remember that some are just now learning what is right and giving them room to grow. A tolerant person will encourage and help a person to want to learn good character.

A tolerant person doesn't judge a person by his outward appearance or by things he can't help or that are different. He tries to understand a person's inward motivations by learning about him and asking him questions.

A tolerant person will look at his own faults when he is irritated by another's actions. He will choose to be peaceful when others irritate him.

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Just as candy comes in many flavors that all taste good, we should appreciate others who are different and live peaceably with them.

What does Tolerance look like?

1. Getting to know a new child at school who is different from others in some way.
2. Not getting angry when someone irritates you, but instead asking him polite questions to find out why he is doing that.
3. Learning about a race or nationality that is different from you.
4. Politely helping a friend understand why being dishonest isn't good.
5. Choosing to ignore the insults of your younger brother and remaining peaceful.

Memory Work

I will not confuse what's right with what is popular to do; I will look for ways to help my friends Find good things to pursue.

I will listen first before I speak, and not quickly condemn. I'll expect the same things of myself that I expect of them.

My character is what will make a leader out of me! So next time through, let's say it more **ENTHUSIASTICALLY!**

Lesson from History An Appetite for Learning



Staring out the frozen window pane of her home, Abigail Adams' thoughts turned toward the cheerful young boy outside diligently chopping wood. The young boy's happy smile was one thing Abigail could count on to brighten the lonely days during her husband's absence. "What would I do without James?" she thought affectionately.

Many people considered it impossible to have friends with different colored skin. The fact that her skin was white and James' skin was black didn't make any difference to her. It was James' character that made him special.

Did you spot the "I Will"? Abigail accepted her unchangeables and the unchangeables of others. She valued character rather than the color of a person's skin.

In addition to James' cheerful spirit, Abigail appreciated his appetite for learning. Smiling, she laughed softly as she remembered all the questions James had asked her that very morning. Suddenly, Abigail had an idea. She would teach James to read so that he could answer his own questions.

Without delay, Abigail pulled down the dusty old readers she had used to teach her own children. Each day, James' finished his chores around the house so he could concentrate on his studies. One evening during their lessons, Mrs. Adams could not help but notice that James was distracted. "What is bothering you, James?" Quickly he blurted out, "I was wondering if I might attend school!"

Abigail wanted the very best for James. "What a wonderful idea!" she responded. "I will make the arrangements and pay the tuition myself."

Did you spot the "I Will"? Abigail Adams looked for ways to help others mature.

A short time after James started his classes, Abigail heard a loud knock at the door. A neighbor entered the room seeming to be greatly disturbed. "Mrs. Adams, this is not a social call. I thought you would like to know that there are those who strongly object to James' presence at school. You should probably keep him at home."

Abigail was shocked. "Has he misbehaved? Or has he been a hindrance to the other children's studies?" Offering no clear answer, Abigail was forced to come to a conclusion on her own. The objections had nothing to do with James' character. The complaints were directed only toward the color of his skin.

Realizing that there was not any problem with James' behavior or performance at school, Abigail responded. "Perhaps you might be able to tell me who the others are, and why they have not come to voice their opinions," she said. The man seemed quite embarrassed.

Did you spot the "I Will"? Abigail listened before forming an opinion.

"Sir these are things that James cannot change. They have nothing to do with his ability as a student. In fact," she continued, "your concerns attack the very principal of liberty itself. James is a free man as much as you are. There is no reason why he should be denied an education."

Did you spot the "I Will"? Mrs. Adams did not confuse what was right with what was popular.

The man could not argue with the truth in Mrs. Adams' words. Reluctantly, he admitted, "You are right. Let me assure you, no more complaints will be made."

After the door closed, Abigail caught sight of James hiding behind the staircase. "Thank you!" he whispered. Abigail smiled in return. "You'd better go back to your studies." With a grin that stretched from ear to ear, James hurried off to his lessons.

Adapted from **Character First**, by Kelly Sorge

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