

"Honesty is the best policy."  
-- George Washington



### What is Truthfulness?

The word "truthfulness" comes from the Old English word "treowth, meaning "firm, solid, or steadfast." Truth does not change; it is real. Truthfulness means to speak the facts with sincerity (consistency through and through.)

Being truthful is more than speaking, however; communication can take place with body language, facial expressions, tone of voice, and even with silence. Being truthful in all these areas of communication springs from a heart that is committed to the truth.

It is important to be one who accurately evaluates the "truth" one hears, in order to be able to present the truth to others. A person who is committed to the truth will not follow fluctuating standards.

A person's truthfulness is measured by his long-term, consistent application of truth. Just one lie can damage one's reputation as truthful for a long time, perhaps irreparably. A commitment to truth requires that a person correct mistakes with apologies when he discovers that he has presented inaccuracies.

### Enemies of Truthfulness

- ◆ White lies
- ◆ Partial truths
- ◆ Bending rules
- ◆ Withholding facts
- ◆ Exaggeration
- ◆ excuses
- ◆ Deception
- ◆ Shifting topics
- ◆ Embellishing
- ◆ Inaccuracy
- ◆ Vagueness
- ◆ Conflicting body language

### Discussion Questions

1. How does a "love of truth" carry over into daily work activities, especially regarding time (personal business, coffee breaks, etc.)?
2. Are you aware of deceptive practices in the history of your organization that have caused long-term harm? What "short term benefits" do you think might have made the deception so tempting?
3. Can you share an incident where you found it very difficult to be truthful? Looking back, do you seem the benefits of being truthful in that situation?
4. How can we gain skill in discerning the truth when attractive claims are being made?
5. Have you ever encountered shifting standards in an organization you were part of? Describe some of the effects that had on those working with them.
6. What do you think the main reason for dealing honestly with company supplies is?



"Appearances are only as good as the truths they represent. Do not mistake image for reality!"  
-- Character First

### Think about it: what if-

- " Every nation had different measurement standards for hours, days, months, and years?
- " Builders all used their own system for measuring?
- " The food industry used a different standard for weight every day?

Isn't it the same with truth? If standards of what is true change often, what kind of foundation does society have? "Society depends on the honest observance of regular standards." (Character First)

--Character First

Featuring this month-

## Truthfulness vs. Deception

"Earning future trust by accurately reporting past facts."

I will:

- ◆ Tell the truth.
- ◆ Encourage others to tell the truth.
- ◆ Not cheat or steal.
- ◆ Admit it when I am wrong.
- ◆ Not exaggerate to make things seem different than what they are.

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"Truth is disagreeable only to a fool."  
-- Arabic proverb



### Lions

Lions "tell the truth." The body language of a lion clearly announces

his intentions and state of mind. See the "[Just For Kids](#)" nature page for more about the lion.



" Let me go down linked to the truth-let me die in the advocacy of what is just and right."  
-- Abraham Lincoln

(For more on Mr. Lincoln's honesty, see the [Just For Kids](#) page.)



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

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