

Determination

Character... It starts with me!

MONTHLY EDUCATOR BULLETIN

Vs. Faintheartedness

I WILL:

- Set goals.
- Make sure your goals are right.
- Ignore distractions.
- Do not be discouraged by others.
- Face problems head on.

Overcoming obstacles to reach my goal

Since the opposite of Determination is Faintheartedness, then Stoutheartedness would be a synonym of Determination. The image of a stouthearted person conjures up someone hunkered down, prepared for battle, ready to do whatever it takes for what they believe in. A Determined person will harness that brute force strength with wisdom to act with purpose and within appropriate boundaries. Determination requires lion-hearted courage when obstacles get in the way. There's nothing half-hearted about Determination!

This month let Determination motivate you to achieve a worthy goal.

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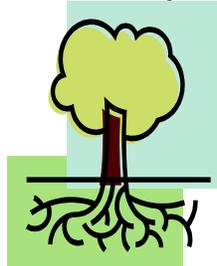
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No Matter How You Say It

↻ ↻ Go to the Root ↻ ↻

From the Latin word *terminare* meaning “to bound, to limit, to prescribe”. Can you see how Determination sets limits to remain faithful to a task, minimizing distractions and focusing on the goal?



Penderfyniad - Welsh

Rozhodnutí - Czech

Paa - Hawaiian

Determinación - Spanish

Sign Language

Check out the following website for the American Sign Language interpretation of

Determined <https://www.handspeak.com/word/search/index.php?id=5897>

Give Up <https://www.handspeak.com/word/search/index.php?id=913>

Can you see how determined is hands-on and giving up is hands-off?

From Miriam Webster (www.merriam-webster.com)

Determination

Synonyms

decidedness, decision, decisiveness, determinedness, firmness, granite, purposefulness, resoluteness, resolution, resolve, stick-to-itiveness

Antonyms

hesitation, indecision, indecisiveness, irresoluteness, irresolution, vacillation

Related Words

doggedness, obduracy, obdurateness, obstinacy, obstinateness, perseverance, persistence, persistency, stubbornness, tenaciousness, tenacity; certainty, certitude, confidence, sureness, alacrity, eagerness, gameness, readiness, backbone, fortitude, grit, iron, pluck, sand

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

Character Quotables

“Little by little one walks far”
~Peruvian Proverb

“We must remember that one determined person can make a significant difference, and that a small group of determined people can change the course of history.”
~Sonia Johnson

“You've got to get up every morning with determination if you're going to go to bed with satisfaction.”
~George Lorimer

“The difference between the impossible and the possible lies in a man's determination.”
~Tommy Lasorda

Whatever we vividly imagine, ardently desire, sincerely believe, and enthusiastically act upon must inevitably come to pass.”
~Mary Kay Ash

A dream doesn't become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination and hard work.

~Colin Powell

“Determine that the thing can and shall be done, and then we shall find the way.”
~Abraham Lincoln

“In the confrontation between

the stream and the rock, the stream always wins- not through strength but by perseverance.”

~H. Jackson Brown

“Desire is the key to motivation, but it's determination and commitment to an unrelenting pursuit of your goal - a commitment to excellence - that will enable you to attain the success you seek.”

~Mario Andretti

“You don't have to get it perfect, you just have to get it going. Babies don't walk the first time they try, but eventually they get it right”

~Jack Canfield

“The wishbone will never replace the backbone”

~Will Henry

“It's not that I'm so smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer.”

~Albert Einstein

“Success is a little like wrestling a gorilla. You don't quit when you're tired. You quit when the gorilla is tired.”

~ Robert Strauss

“In racing, they say that your car goes where your eyes go. The driver who cannot tear his eyes away from the wall as he spins out of control will meet that wall; the driver who looks down the track as he feels his tires break free will regain control of his vehicle.”

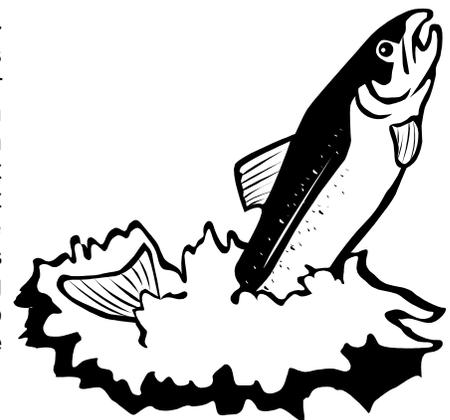
~Garth Stein

Curriculum Connection



Science

The Return of the Salmon - Salmon are hatched from eggs that are in the bottom of a river bed. Once hatched, salmon swim downstream to the ocean. When salmon are 4 years old they get the urge to swim back to the spot in the river where they were hatched to lay their own eggs. As you can imagine, swimming upstream is very difficult so salmon must practice Determination on the swim back.



Lilly Eagle Dorman Colby



Lilly Eagle Dorman Colby was placed in foster care at the age of 12 and was in 5 different foster homes until she aged out at age 18. At 20, she petitioned to become a foster parent to her younger brother who was autistic. During her time in foster care, Lily saw many rules that prevented or made it difficult for the correct care to be given. Her experiences made her determined to change the system.

Lily says, "I care about working on foster care reform because I know there are a lot of kids who need more support, who need to find loving families and get

adopted, and who need help dealing with learning disabilities or physical disabilities so they can have a chance at success."

Lily has been named one of Glamour Magazine's top ten college women for not only her efforts in advocating for youth in care, but also her other life accomplishments. Lily has interned for the Orphan Foundation America, has been a tutor and mentor, written several nationally recognized articles, was an active member of California Youth Connection, was a volunteer for AmeriCorps, a member of student government while at both

Berkeley and Yale, and has helped more adequately train child welfare professionals.

Lily is determined to improve the foster care system. She has written a handbook for foster youth about how to apply for college, and she served as an AmeriCorps volunteer helping first-generation college-bound youth apply for college. For more information contact Children's Voice at voice@cwla.org.

Team~Building Activity

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

Ace High



Divide the class into groups no larger than 13 students in each group. Give each group member a playing card. All of the cards for one group should be the same suit. Instruct the students to arrange themselves to stand in a line in order of the rank of the cards with the Ace being the highest card. For younger groups, you may only want to use the number cards. Time each group. Ask them how they approached the problem of ordering the cards. Give them time in their group to review how they did. Now give them time to discuss how they might do it faster next time and then give them a chance to shuffle the cards and try again. See if they did it faster the second time. To make this exercise more difficult, instruct the students that they are not allowed to look at their own card, rather, they must hold it face side out against their forehead without looking at it. To incorporate a math lesson give each student 2 number cards to hold on their forehead that must be added together to determine ranking.



Aim High

For this activity you will need 4 paper plates. Mark one number on each plate: 5, 10, 15, 20. Each student will receive 2-3 pennies, buttons, or some small object. Mark a line on the floor with masking tape. Place the first plate (marked 5) close enough to the line so that when standing behind the line, most students can throw the penny and have it land on the plate. Place the three remaining plates in order farther away from the first plate so that the higher the value the farther the plate. The 20 point plate still needs to be within a reasonable distance for the age and skills of your students. Use only 3 plates if 4 plates make the distance too far. The last plate needs to be a challenge for the students; they should not be able to throw to that plate easily. Start by asking the students to stand in a line behind the tape line. They will take turns throwing their pennies onto the first plate. Once everyone has had a chance to do that, let them collect the pennies and try again, this time aiming for the second plate. When they master the second plate, they can move onto the third and so on. When they have completed all of the plates you can ask them how difficult it would have been to start with the last plate. Help them to see that in order to achieve larger goals, you need to break it down into smaller goals and work up to accomplishing large tasks.

With the numbers on the plates, you can have the students keep score based on how many plates they hit. You can also number the plates 1, 2, 3, 4 if you don't wish to keep score. For much younger students you may want to use hoola hoops or box lids to provide larger targets.



Cold Cash

This activity requires that you prepare special ice cubes ahead of time. Fill the tray half full and freeze. Place a dime, nickel or penny on the ice cube half and fill with water. Return to the freezer. Try to get the coin in the middle of the ice cube. Divide the class into small groups of 2 or 3. Each group gets an ice cube which they must melt in order to get to the coin. Use different valued coins so that they are not all the same. The rules for melting are that they may not touch their tongue or mouth to the ice cube and they may not hit it with anything or throw it at anything. (Be sure to give each group paper towels to avoid puddles in the classroom or do this activity outside.) When all of the groups have melted their cube enough to remove the coin discuss how this activity relates to be determined to reach a goal. Ask if they would do it differently if they had a second chance. Did they watch what other groups were doing and copy? If you had a lower value coin did you work as hard as groups that had higher value coins? Did you work harder when you first started or when you got closer? How does determination help you reach your goals?

Domino Determination

You will need dominos or any object that can be set up like a domino drop chain. You will need to set up 3 chains. The first chain should have some of the dominos too far apart for the chain to continue to fall. The second chain should have the middle of the chain off-set so that the second half of the chain does not fall. The third chain should have all of the dominos aligned so that they all fall consecutively. Before tripping the domino chains, discuss goals and how determination plays a part in achievement. You may want to find an age appropriate story or just a few facts about Thomas Edison's determination in inventing the light bulb. He had an unbelievable number of failures before hitting on the right combination. Talk about how losing interest in a project makes it hard to complete. Demonstrate this with the first domino chain. Next, you can talk about how distraction or losing your focus on a goal makes it hard to achieve. Demonstrate this with the second domino chain. Staying determined helps achieve goals. Demonstrate this with the third domino chain.

Keeping with the theme of dominos, create a hand-out for the students that has space for writing a goal at the top. The main body of the page should be 3 large dominos drawn sideways. The first one has just one dot on the left side and blank on the right. The second domino has two dots on the left, blank on the right. The third should have 3 dots on the left and blank on the right. The students should identify a goal at the top of the page and write steps or activities that will help reach the goal on each of the right sides of the dominos. Encourage the goals to be small enough that they can be achieved this month. At the end of each week have the students revisit these pages to see how on track they are.



A TALE OF TWO FROGS



Two frogs fell into a can of cream,
Or so I've heard it told:
The sides of the can were shiny - 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.
He kicked and kicked and swam and kicked.
Then hopped out, via BUTTER!

Author Unknown

Use this poem to illustrate the need for Determination. After reading it, you can demonstrate the making of butter. Label a mason jar or old mayo jar Determination 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. Tighten the lid and 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 websites that offer kid-friendly science on butter making go to:

<http://www.makeandtakes.com/edible-science-experiment-making-butter-whipped-cream>

<https://thehappyscientist.com/content/making-butter>

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

For a video version of Two Frogs in Cream go to:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3i0MpSU-e5A>

For the Family

We are studying the character quality of **Determination**: Purposing to accomplish right goals at the right time, regardless of the opposition.

To practice Determination I will:

- Set goals.
- Make sure your goals are right.
- Ignore distractions.
- Do not be discouraged by others.
- Face problems head on.



Family Activity:

Mapping the future: Find an old road map that you don't mind if the kids write on. If you are planning a road trip in the near future, you can use that as a destination for planning or you may solicit input on a pretend destination. Have the kids map the route that you would follow to reach your destination. Have them calculate how many miles it is and determine how long it will take to get there. Did they remember to allow time for eating, rest breaks (overnights necessary?) and gas fill ups? Would they like to stop and visit anything along the way? How will this affect arriving at their final destination? What types of things will you do once you arrive and what do you have to pack to be prepared when you get there? Do you need anything to entertain you in the car? How much money is needed for gas, food, lodging while on the road? Is the time/money it takes to get there worth what you will do at the destination? What happens if things don't go according to plan? Can you plan and prepare for some problems? Once you have completed the planning for this journey ask if they could have a successful journey if they didn't plan? How can the journey to accomplishing a goal be just as enjoyable as the final outcome?



Other ways to teach character in the home:

- Display the character quality and definition in a prominent place such as on the refrigerator or let each child decorate it for their bedroom door.
- At the dinner table ask if anyone noticed anyone (not just family members) demonstrating the character quality (or not demonstrating it).
- Point out news stories where character was or was not involved.
- Review the "I wills" and see if there are specific actions you can add to this list.
- During car trips, challenge the kids by describing scenarios and having them identify if it describes being the quality or being the opposite.
- Praise with character by recognizing the character quality involved rather than the achievement.
- For more ideas visit www.charactercincinnati.org/education.php

"If people only knew how hard I work to gain my mastery, it wouldn't seem so wonderful at all."

--Michelangelo, Italian sculptor, painter, architect, poet and engineer

"I've been through a fire, and I stayed. I've been through a flood, and I stayed. I've just been through a tornado. I'm gonna stay." These are the words of a woman who lost most of her house in the March, 2012, tornado which hit Moscow, Ohio. Clearly, she was Determined to stay. Matter of fact, she showed me a clear example of the definition of the Character Quality of the Month, Determination; "Overcoming obstacles to reach my goal" She had a Purpose; she had Goals she intended to Accomplish; she was heedless of the Opposition. Or, if you wanted a clearer definition of Determination, all you had to do was look at the expression on her face. Will she still be in Moscow in 2013? You can count on it!

Croskey's Corner

In our house, when one of us shows Determination, we call it being a Trooper. It means that the family member had to go through a very trying ordeal, but stuck to it. My son fought a beta streptococcus infection when he was 4 days old, and survived. My daughter had 2 wisdom teeth ripped from her jaw, which then got infected. She stoically persevered for 5 days before the surgeon's office admitted she needed an antibiotic. Both were being a Trooper in our book.

You have witnessed many examples of Determination in your own life, no doubt. Here is my dilemma with Determination; let's call it Hard Work for the discussion. Which is more crucial in accomplishing anything? Hard Work? Or Talent? (You are not allowed to say, "Both.") Paul Daugherty interviewed Joey Votto of the Cincinnati Reds. Talent? Well, Votto is a .313 hitter, and was Most Valuable Player in 2010. He won a Gold Glove Award in 2011. Yet, Mr. Daugherty shared that Votto attributed his success at hitting to reading and re-reading a book written 40 years ago, *The Science of Hitting*, by Ted Williams. According to Votto, hitting is about doing things correctly. He quotes Williams as saying that everyone knows HOW to hit, but few do. The secret was not really a secret – Work Hard. Votto tries to follow that motto. In other interviews, Votto has said that he had to Work very Hard to learn to play First Base well enough to win the Gold Glove. I am not going to give in on the need for Hard Work, even when you remind me that Talents such as speed, hand-eye coordination, strength, and great reflexes all help immensely. As a .067 hitter in my best year in Little League, I should know!

But, for another argument for Hard Work, take the Michelangelo quote at the beginning of this piece: "If people only knew how hard I work to gain my mastery, it wouldn't seem so wonderful at all." One of the greatest sculptors and painters of all time and he credits his achievement to Hard Work, not Talent.

The story is often the same with actors, singers, or writers. Years of suffering, Hard Work, and finally a pay off. What keeps people going is Hard Work and Determination. (I guess the Character First! people thought Determination alone sounded better as a Character Quality. But honestly, it ought to have both in the title.)

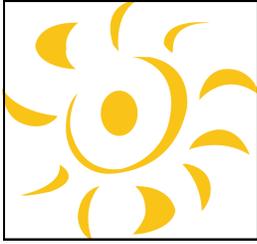
For teachers, the idea of Determination is a big one. If teachers are asked who the smartest kids in their rooms are, they are likely to describe a student with great Executive Functioning skills; that is, a student who is a good self-starter on individual work, who sticks with the task, who ignores distractions, who can stop if interrupted but can get back to it with apparent ease, and who finishes the job well. (And, one who remembers to turn it in at the right time!) So, the neuropsychologist might call it Executive Functioning, but a teacher calls it Determination to get the job done. And a boss on a later job will call it a good Work Ethic.

CNN author Bob Greene wrote a memorial column to his friend Jeff Zaslow, co-author with Randy Pausch of *The Last Lecture*. (http://www.cnn.com/2012/03/04/opinion/greene-zaslow/index.html?hpt=hp_c2) He said of Zaslow that he only knew one way to do a job – the right way. He went on to say that, no matter the job, making the extra effort to make sure things are done correctly is essential. He gave the example of a teacher who reviews a lesson plan, adding something vital late at night, even though neither students nor school administrators will ever be aware of the effort she put in. She does it not because others will know, but because SHE will know. Greene says that when the day finally comes and you have a big success, get a big "break," it won't be because of your extra effort one time. It will be because you made the effort every single time. And THAT is Determination!

So, educators, you know something about the value of Hard Work – in yourself, and in your students. But what about Talent. I'm not sure. I think the Talented and Gifted Movement makes a persuasive argument that some kids have more Talent in certain areas than others do. I will admit that I do not know if any person with low Talent and immense Hard Work can succeed at anything she or he wants to do. I DO know that someone with immense Talent and no Work Ethic can easily end up without success. But which truly, is more important? Can I learn to draw with lessons in technique and lots of practice? Or do I also need Talent? I give up.

But teachers have one choice, dictated by circumstance. They cannot inject Talent where it is not there. No gene splicing machines or genetic engineering programs in the school clinic. Teachers are stuck demonstrating techniques, offering practice opportunities, and motivating students to believe in and utilize Hard Work to make the most of their efforts. And, of most importance, educators can present the model that making the extra effort every time to do a job right pays off somewhere down the road. In fact, Determination is partially an act of faith that Hard Work will eventually lead to success. You can count on it!

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

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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.