

Character Connections

Notes for Chapter 4 in the Cub Scout Leader book p. 4-1 to 4-6

Covers:

Why We Need Character Development?

What is Character and How is it Developed?

Principles for Developing Character.

Defining the 12 Core Values.

Character Connections.

Three Common Myths about Character Development.

Character Development Goals.

Defining the 12 Core Values.

These 12 values are interconnected and interdependent each as important as the others. Scouts need to know these values but more importantly they need to know how to use them in everything a Scout does. As Leaders, we need to strive to promote the 12 core values in service projects, ceremonies, games, skits, songs, crafts, and all other activities that are enjoyed at Den and Pack Meetings.

I'd like to include pages 4-3 to 4-5 in this outline as it breaks the 12 parts of Character Connections into practical examples.

1. Citizenship:

Contributing service and showing responsibility to local, state, and national communities.

- Know the names of the President and Vice President of the United States.
- Know the names of your state governor and heads of local government.
- Respect the flag of the United States.
- Know and understand the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Know and understand our national anthem, "The Star-Spangled Banner."
- Be a good neighbor.
- Obey laws and rules.
- Respect people in authority.
- Protect the environment and our national resources.
- Be helpful. Do a Good Turn for your family, school, or community.

2. Compassion:

Having consideration and concern for the well-being of others.

- Be friendly. Don't be mean or insensitive to the feelings of others.
- Show kindness. Be kind to those less fortunate than yourself.
- Help those in need.
- Consider other people's feelings.
- Help someone who is being treated unfairly.
- Look for ways to include others in the group.
- Be willing to forgive others.

3. Cooperation:

Working together with others toward a common goal.

- Be helpful to others and work together.
- Do your part in a project.
- Listen to and consider the ideas of others.
- Be unselfish.
- Be cheerful/
- Share things with others.
- Be happy for the good fortune of others on the team.
- Use everyone's special talents.
- Be friendly.
- Be willing to share the credit.

4. Courage:

Tell the truth despite the consequences.

- Admit mistakes when you make them.
- Apologize for mistakes and wrongdoing.
- Accept the consequences of your actions.
- Stand up for people who are less fortunate than you.
- Stand up for the beliefs of your faith or religion.
- Resist peer pressure to do the wrong thing.
- Stand up for your beliefs about what is right and wrong.

5. Faith:

Having inner strength or confidence based on our trust in a higher power.

- Define your duty to God as it is taught in your family.
- Understand and practice your religious tradition.

- Stay hopeful when things get tough.
- Be cheerful about your duties.
- Look for the good in all situations.
- Remain confident in difficult situations.
- Figure out what you *can* do; don't worry about what you *can't* do.
- Show reverence for churches, holy places, and religious or spiritual objects that are meaningful to the faiths of others.

6. Health and fitness:

Being personally committed to caring for our minds and bodies.

- Eat and drink things that are good for you.
- Limit the amount of "junk food" in your diet.
- Maintain personal cleanliness.
- Make exercise a regular part of your life.
- Don't smoke cigarettes or drink alcohol.
- Never use illegal drugs.
- Go on a hike.
- Ride a bike, skateboard, or scooter (always with appropriate safety gear!).
- Play on a sports team, such as one for basketball, baseball, football. Or soccer.
- Practice an individual sport, such as swimming, gymnastics, skating, or tennis.
- Learn about mental fitness. Discuss how personal habits and media influences can affect mental alertness.

7. Honestly:

Telling the truth and being a person worthy of trust.

- Don't lie.
- Don't cheat.
- Don't steal the personal property or ideas of others.
- Keep your word.
- Be trustworthy.
- Do what you say you will do.
- Tell the whole truth regardless of the consequences.
- Be loyal to your family, friends, religion, and country.
- Don't gossip, spread rumors, or talk behind people's backs.

8. Perseverance:

Sticking with something and not giving up, even if it is difficult.

- Finish what you start.
- Never give up. Continue to work hard even if you're not successful at first.
- Work to get better at things you aren't good at.
- Set personal goals for improvement.
- Always do your best.

9. Positive attitude:

Setting your mind to look for and find the best in all situations.

- Be positive in your thoughts and words. Be cheerful. Look for the bright side of all situations.
- Keep a good sense of humor. Be optimistic.
- Think good thoughts.
- Believe in yourself.
- Trust your friends, family, and teammates.

10. Resourcefulness:

Using human and other resources to their fullest.

- Think about *how you can*, rather than *why you can't*.
- Focus on what you do have, not on what you don't have.
- Identify person strengths.
- Use the talents of those in our group.
- Conserve the earth's natural resources.
- Recycle household waste.
- Compost kitchen waste for use in gardens.
- Fix up an old bicycle rather than buy a new one.
- Clean up an old playground.

11. Respect:

Showing regard for the worth of someone or something.

- Treat other people as you would like to be treated.
- Don't insult or bully people who are different from you.
- Be courteous; use good manners and good language.
- Take care of school and public property.
- Honor the country's flag, laws, and public officials.
- Appreciate the religions of other people.
- Obey the rules and instructions of adults.

- Use dangerous objects (e.g. knives, fire) with care.
- Respect others without necessarily agreeing with all of their ideas.
- Treat the environment (trees, rivers, land, air) with care.
- Have confidence in your abilities.
- Keep yourself neat and clean.
- Stay in shape.

12. Responsibility:

Fulfilling our duty to take care of ourselves and others.

- Be dependable; do what you say you will do.
- Finish your homework.
- Take care of chores at home.
- Be helpful.
- Accept the consequences for your actions.
- Take care of your personal possessions.



Character Connections

Using **the Ethics in Action** video AV-01V003 the second part –**Reflecting**

The reflection is a guided discussion used after the **Lost in Space** game, which helps the youth see the Core value and understand how it applies to the activity. This is why the **Character Connections** in the new books are tied to an achievement—the Scout is supposed to discuss the value directly after finishing the requirement—(thinking (the head)--**Knowledge**, feeling (the heart)--**Commitment**)—this way he ties what he did to the core value (behavior (the hand)--**Practice**).

From Jamie Dunn
Three Rivers District –Cub Training Chair
Blaine/Coon Rapids, MN

Ethics in Action Video—Reflecting!

Lost in Space Game-- -about differences and how we deal with them. The group is blindfolded and 1 scout is the space station, who remains off from the group in silence. The blindfolded scouts must “beep” when they run into another scout. They continue to look for the space station where when they find it, they get to take off their blind folds. The scouts talk about their “blind” experiences and their fears.

Questions for the Leader

Did you have a good time? **Reserve judgment, no personal opinions**

Ask non judgmental questions—

1. What do you think the purpose of the game is?
No-- yes or no questions
Ask questions that ask for personal thoughts.
2. How did you feel?
**Feeling questions!!
3. What was the best part of the activity?
4. How do you think blind people feel?

****Guiding Questions**—you need to know where you are going – keep them on course!

5. What do you think you learned playing the game?

****Closing Questions!!**

Pulling together thoughts and drawing some conclusions.

Games with a purpose-

1. Reserve judgment—let them give their ideas
2. Open ended questions—require scouts to think and give personal ideas.
3. Feeling questions—what did they felt about the experience—that makes it personal to the scouts.
4. Judgment questions— about their feelings
5. Ask guiding questions and stay on track
6. Closing thoughts—Bring discussion to an end.

Resources on Character Connections
By Jamie Dunn
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The following is from an article in March-April 2003 issue of **Scouting** magazine:

Cub Scouting's Resources for Character Development

Cub Scouting literature is one key area into which the Cub Scouting Character Connections Program has begun to be integrated in the last year and a half.

Resources include

- * The Cub Scout Character Development flier (BSA No. 13-323A), available from local councils.
- * Chapter 4 in the Cub Scout Leader Book (No. 33221B).
- * Current issues of Cub Scout Program Helps (No. 34304E) and Cub Scout Roundtable Planning Guide (No. 34239D).
- * The Tiger Cub Handbook (No. 34713).
- * New editions of the Wolf, Bear, and Webelos youth handbooks.
- * The grid "Cub Scout Character Development: Ideas for Connecting Core Values with Outdoor Activities," support material provided to Cub Scout camp directors.

Character Connections-Philmont Report

Notes from Sean Scott

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As far as a script goes, that was one of the subjects of discussion at the presentation. There will be some "discovery" material in the book for parents and leaders to look over. I think that this will work better than a script, when there is an awareness of the program, since it will "feel" more natural and takes advantage of opportunities.

Let me give you an example.

Say you're working on a conservation project or hike. You're out in nature, and you come across a pile of rubbish left by some campers or hikers. One of your boys makes a comment about how rude or careless littering is.

This is your opportunity!

Ask the boys why they think it's rude to litter. This is the **Know** component. They've seen an example of littering, and now they realize that it's not nice to toss your trash in the woods. Ask them how they felt when they came across the pile of trash. Did it distract them from everything else that was around them? Did it make them forget that they were looking for animal tracks, or a certain type of plant? This is the **Commit** phase, where these boys realize that they don't want to be thought of in the same way as they're thinking of whoever left the trash. Now that you've guided them to discover how they feel, they establish a personal set of values about littering.

The important part here is that it is easy to break a rule we don't believe in or hold as a personal value. People speed because they don't think it's too wrong--they consider themselves good drivers and capable of handling a vehicle at a higher speed than the posted limit, or because the importance of being someplace sooner

outweighs the importance of breaking the law. Speeding just doesn't violate most people's core values or beliefs.

Most people, though, do have a value system that prevents them from shoplifting. Doing so would violate their personal values.

Going back to our example, we've helped the boys establish *for themselves* that littering is wrong, guided them to understand how they feel about the person that left the trash, and realize that they don't want to be thought of in the same way. Now we apply the last part of the program, **Practice**.

Help them make the decision to pick up the trash, and to not litter themselves. It's not until they have an opportunity to actually do/avoid something that the three parts come together and a character connection is made.

Another example might be in doing chores. It's not fun, but it is a responsibility. Talk about why they need to do chores, what they can do to make them more fun. Help them understand the need, the benefit, and so forth.

* While a single CC might be the highlight of a particular achievement, there is nothing to say that others might not come into play.

* The 12 CC's included in the program are what the authors felt were key concepts, but by no means is it a comprehensive list. Other values may be a part of/required to reach the ultimate goal of teaching one of the twelve.

* This isn't a classroom type of program. Rather, it's a method by which we as leaders can have an informal discussion with youth and allow them to discover how they feel about something. For example, if a boy sees someone toss trash on the ground, you might ask him how he feels. Why does he feel that way? What would he do instead? How can he change things? This goes back to the aspects of Know, Commit and Practice--the boy realizes that littering is wrong, recognizes how it makes him feel to see others do

it and makes a personal value decision to not do so himself, and then practices that decision.

It just takes commitment on our parts to make it happen.

I suppose that this could be said about everything we do in Scouting. What is the connection to character in any game, any skit or any project that we have the boys do?

How much do we care, how much thought do give as we plan our programs or inform the boys' parents on how the program works?

Character Connections

Philmont Report by Sean Scott

Assistant Council Commissioner-Training, Webmaster
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(His chat with one of the authors of the new **Character Connections**,
Dr. Matt Davidson)

We were fortunate to have Dr. Matt Davidson, one of the authors of the new Character Connections material, present at Philmont this past week to give a talk on the new Character Connections material, the thoughts behind it, and how it will be integrated into the new boy books. Here are some highlights from his presentation, taken from my notes.

There are certain myths about character development, namely that you will eventually evolve into a good person, that youth are small adults, and that character is the same no matter the environment.

We've learned that not attending to character development doesn't work. Case in point was the Ethics in Action program which attempted to make character an optional element of the program. We also know that character development needs to be part of the territory and taught as part of the environment. Character Connections, by being integrated into the books, achievements, materials, and so forth, accomplishes this.

Character Connections involves 12 core character values. There is no reason to assume that these are the only 12, but the feeling is that if a boy leaves Scouting with a concept of these 12 core elements that we've done a good job of teaching character.

CC attempts to teach the skills of learning character. For any given achievement, there has been one particular CC that is emphasized, but that doesn't mean that it is the only one that can be focused on. For example, for the Tigers the boys are supposed to work on helping around the house. The CC that is identified is responsibility, but respect, positive attitude, perseverance and cooperation might also be part of the activity.

Dr. Davidson said that character development is a process, not a program, and so unlike Ethics in Action it is integrated into the actual framework of the ranks. It needs to be driven by determining and building on a child's developmental ability.

CC also involves three dimensions that aren't separate or even separable-- originally they were hear, heart and hand, but were changed to know, commit and practice. The boy needs to know the CC (head), commit to it (heart) and practice it in his daily life (hand).

Character is both caught and taught. We see someone exhibiting character and follow their example in our community. In this way, boys see that the CC is needed in the community, and it offers them a chance to shape their environment in a positive manner. We can also teach character by telling, discussion, experience and modeling. This is where the discussion points in the books come into play.

Dr. Davidson told a joke about the importance of us, as leaders, taking a completely positive lead in modeling character. A father is doing all he can to teach his sons the values of hard work and dedication. He has had a hard day at work and comes home to start fixing dinner. While they're waiting for dinner, the boys are talking in their room. One says, "I really like the way dad says 'H...'" The other says "I like the way he says 'You can bet your a..'" When they're called for dinner, the dad asks the first boy what he wants to drink with it. "H..., I'll just have some milk." The father is furious and sends the boy to his room. He turns to the second, and asks the same question. "You can bet your a.. I'm not having milk!"

The point is that no matter how hard we try to set a good example, it isn't just the good examples that are caught by our youth. They don't magically see only the proper things, but pick up the bad things we do. Thus it's important that we as parents and leaders continually set the example for our youth.

The end goal of CC is to establish a moral identity for our youth. Until a boy takes on Scouting's values as his or her own, it isn't a violation of a child's personal morals to break those values. Values are situational, too. In the context of a Scout meeting, a boy may quite comfortably recite the pledge or discussing the importance of not littering. However, under pressure from his peers in a non-Scouting setting, the boy needs to have a sense of greater conviction to those same values to stand behind them as strongly when they may not be as popular for him or her to follow them.

CC can be integrated into achievements in the following manner.

1. A warm up, where you discuss individual and group goals.

2. Practice, where the values are broken into actual skills. Here it may help to script the steps toward the end goal so that difficult concepts can be better understood.
3. Cultivation of a sense of community and the impact that values have on the boy's place in that community.
4. Cool down, where discussion of what went well, what could have gone better, and what might come next can be discussed.

In September, Dr. Davidson is meeting with BSA to investigate the extension of CC into Boy Scouting. They currently exist in the Tiger book, Wolf, Bear and Webelos books, Program Helps, and Cub Roundtable Planning Guide.

I'm working on getting a copy of the actual presentation that Dr. Davidson gave. This Presentation is included on the University of Scouting CD.