



## My Character: My Life, Your Life, Our Future

Name:

My School:

My Teacher:

My Class:

## Having Patience

The My Character Resources have been developed by the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues at the University of Birmingham, alongside young people across the UK. This is one of a set of 10 eResources, each aiming to encourage young people to be more future minded and to think about who they are and who they want to become.

The other eResources in this series are

Having a Dream  
Saving for the Future  
Helping Others  
Being Determined  
Having Courage  
Working Together  
Thinking Creatively  
My Character – Review

Please go to [www.mycharacter.co.uk](http://www.mycharacter.co.uk) to download them.

Current location:



Keywords

Self control

Willpower

Waiting

Fortitude

Endurance

Saving

Staying power

Not being selfish

Valuing things

Delayed gratification

# Having Patience

The capacity to accept or tolerate delay, problems or suffering without becoming annoyed or anxious.



Patience is a virtue, but it is also one of the most important character traits to survive life. Today we are led to think we can always get what we want, when we want it. However this is not true and has never been true. The best things come to those who wait, and when you have been made to wait you appreciate things so much more.

Being successful in your future is a waiting game: waiting to get the right grades and qualifications, being patient as you develop the right skills, and ultimately being strong enough to know the right opportunity for you will come along. Therefore it is good to practice being patient in everything we do...so next time you see that phone or pair of trainers you really want, try being patient and see what happens.

# My Inspirations

My favourite quote is:

Because:

'I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work.' – Thomas Edison

'Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap, but by the seeds that you plant.' – Robert Louis Stevenson

'It's not that I'm so smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer.' – Albert Einstein

'Our patience will achieve more than our force.'  
– Edmund Burke

'If I have ever made any valuable discoveries, it has been owing more to patient attention, than to any other talent.'  
– Isaac Newton

'Patience is the best remedy for every trouble.'  
– Titus Maccius Plautus

'How poor are they that have not patience!'  
– William Shakespeare

'Good things come to those who wait'. – Anon

'Patience is waiting. Not passively waiting. That is laziness. But to keep going when the going is hard and slow – that is patience.'  
– Anon

'The key to everything is patience. You get the chicken by hatching the egg, not by smashing it.'  
– Arnold Glasgow

# Inspirational People

Nelson Mandela (1918 – 2013)

Former President of South Africa

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Nelson Mandela, also known as Madiba, is possibly one of the most famous Statesmen in the world. He served as President of South Africa from 1994 to 1999, and was the first South African president to be elected in a fully representative democratic election. Before his presidency, Mandela fought against Apartheid (the system of racial segregation and discrimination in South Africa) and as a result, served 27 years in prison. Nelson Mandela was born in Transkei, South Africa in 1918 and was the first member of his family to go to school. He attended college before moving to Johannesburg and working as a clerk in a law firm, completing his degree at the University of South Africa by correspondence. Mandela grew up in Apartheid South Africa where the rights of the majority non-white population were restricted. After the 1948 election victory of the Afrikaner dominated National Party, Mandela got more involved in politics, leading the ANC's Defiance Campaign and helping to provide low cost law advice to South African blacks who could not afford representation.

He initially believe in being non-violent, but after the government banned the ANC, Nelson Mandela argued for the use of force. In 1962 he was arrested and sentenced to five years' imprisonment with hard labour. Then in 1963, Mandela was brought to stand trial with many others for plotting to overthrow the government by violence, and was sentenced to life imprisonment.

From 1964 to 1982, Mandela was imprisoned at Robben Island Prison, then at Pollsmoor Prison on the mainland. Mandela was seen as a controversial figure, with many of his critics considering him a terrorist. However, people across the world campaigned for his release. Nelson Mandela was finally released on February 11, 1990, after 27 years in prison. After his release, he continued striving to attain the goals he and others had set out almost four decades earlier. In 1994, there were



multi-racial, free and fair elections for the first time, and Mandela and the ANC won 62% of the vote. He was inaugurated on the 10th May 1994. During his years in prison, Nelson Mandela's reputation grew steadily. He was widely accepted as the most significant black leader in South Africa and became a symbol of resistance as the anti-apartheid movement gathered strength. He refused to compromise his political position to obtain his freedom and showed incredible patience as he suffered in prison.

**We must use time wisely and forever realize that the time is always ripe to do right – Nelson Mandela**

# Inspirational People

Jonny Wilkinson (1979 – present day )

Rugby Player



At the age of twelve Wilkinson told his rugby union master “I want to play for England, that’s all I want’. Through skill, matched with the character traits of determination and patience, he went on to be one of England’s most famous rugby players and sports personality, being an integral part of the 2003 Rugby World Cup winning England squad.

Born in 1979, Jonny Wilkinson started playing sports at Pierrepont School, excelling in tennis, cricket, and basketball as well as in rugby. In 1997 he gave up being a student to become a professional rugby union player with the Newcastle Falcons.

Jonny Wilkinson started his professional rugby career at the Newcastle School of Rugby as an Inside Centre and by March 1998 he was in the full England Test Squad. He soon became a fixture in the England team and made his world cup debut against Italy in the 1999 Rugby World Cup.

He continued to be an important part of the England squad, winning 6 Nation Titles and gaining the respect of all in the sports world. He approached rugby with a work ethic that meant he was well known for his ‘first in, last out’ approach to training. When he wasn’t practicing, he was analysing and talking about technique and how to improve his play.

Although known in the sporting world, Jonny Wilkinson really rose to acclaim from 2001 to 2003 and during the 2003 Rugby World Cup and was acknowledged as one of the world’s best rugby union players. His drop goal in the last minute of extra time against Australia in the 2003 Rugby World Cup won England the title, and Jonny was transformed into the Nation’s hero.



He announced his retirement from International Rugby in December 2011.

Jonny Wilkinson showed patience throughout his career, working hard, showing dedication to his sport and putting in the time and effort to his training. His patience was rewarded with the opportunity for his winning drop kick in the Rugby World cup, gaining the acclaim and adoration of the nation and knowing he helped to win the World Cup for England.

**For me now, I will continue to focus ever harder on my goal of being the very best I can be. – Jonny Wilkinson**

Add a Picture of  
your inspirational  
person here

## Having Patience: My Hero

Can you think of an inspirational person who you think showed great patience? This could be someone famous, or someone you know personally and lives locally. Explain their life story and what they did that showed patience:

# My Actions

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## Activity 9: Needs vs Wants

Imagine you were stranded on a desert island... what three things in each of the following categories would you take with you?

### Songs

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### Items in your bedroom

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### Food

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### Items of clothes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### Books

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### Three other things

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### Films

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Success comes to those who wait....

It would be amazing if we got everything we wanted straight away, as soon as we asked for it. But this never happens. However, a key trait of someone who is successful is that they have patience and keep trying for their goal, even when others give up.

One problem is that we set false deadlines for ourselves. TV programmes, such as the X Factor, tells us we can become successful quickly and easily and without much effort. Adverts tell us we can have everything now. We believe if we buy the new trainers we will become great at sport, or a study guide we will pass all our exams easily. Unfortunately this is just not true. There is no magic pill to success, it takes hard work and patience.

For most people, becoming successful takes time. Even when we see someone who seems to be an overnight success – like a comedian, or a pop star – it normally turns out that they have been putting in lots of work for years, doing gigs or making contacts, to make this happen. We just don't get to see this.

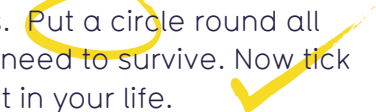


## Willpower and Success

Did you know that those who have the willpower to be patient are more likely to be successful?

A famous experiment was done to test young people's patience. They were offered one marshmallow straight away, or two if they waited for 10 minutes. It was found that those who had patience and waited for two marshmallows grew into wealthier, happier and healthier adults. Those who did not wait, and took the first marshmallow were likely to be not so academic, in low paying jobs, overweight, have fewer savings, more likely to have drug and alcohol problems, and had trouble maintaining stable relationships.

Young people face more temptations in their life than ever before. Can you stay patient, delay gratification and be more successful because of your willpower?

Now look at the following items. Put a circle round all those that you think you really need to survive. Now tick those you think you would want in your life. 

Trainers

Fire

A Dog

A House

Land to grow things on

Television

Meat

Parks and Play spaces

Water

Telephone

A Car

Music

Shelter

Blanket

Education

Vegetables

A bed

Medicines

The Internet

Bread

Books

Friends

Chocolate

Two men called Roy Baumeister and Tierney recently discovered that willpower actually operates like a muscle: it can be strengthened with practice and becomes tired by overuse. Therefore the more you practice having willpower the better you will become at it. So the next time you are offered some chocolate that you think you really shouldn't have, try to say no.



**Now complete the following statements**

A need is something...

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A want is something....

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I should concentrate on meeting my needs rather than my wants because....

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**Activity 10: Group activity: The Human Knot of Patience**

Imagine you were stranded on a desert island....

This activity will test your patience with others. It is very difficult, but not impossible. You will have to show patience with yourself and others in your team to succeed. Divide your class into groups of about six and give each group a rope that is 18 inches long. Ask the group members to hold on to the rope.

The aim of the challenge is for each group to tie a knot at the middle of the rope. During the process, the members must have their hands on the rope at all times. The activity can be frustrating and will take a lot of time.

Did your group succeed?

**How did you succeed, what were your tactics?**

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Was your patience tested during the challenge?

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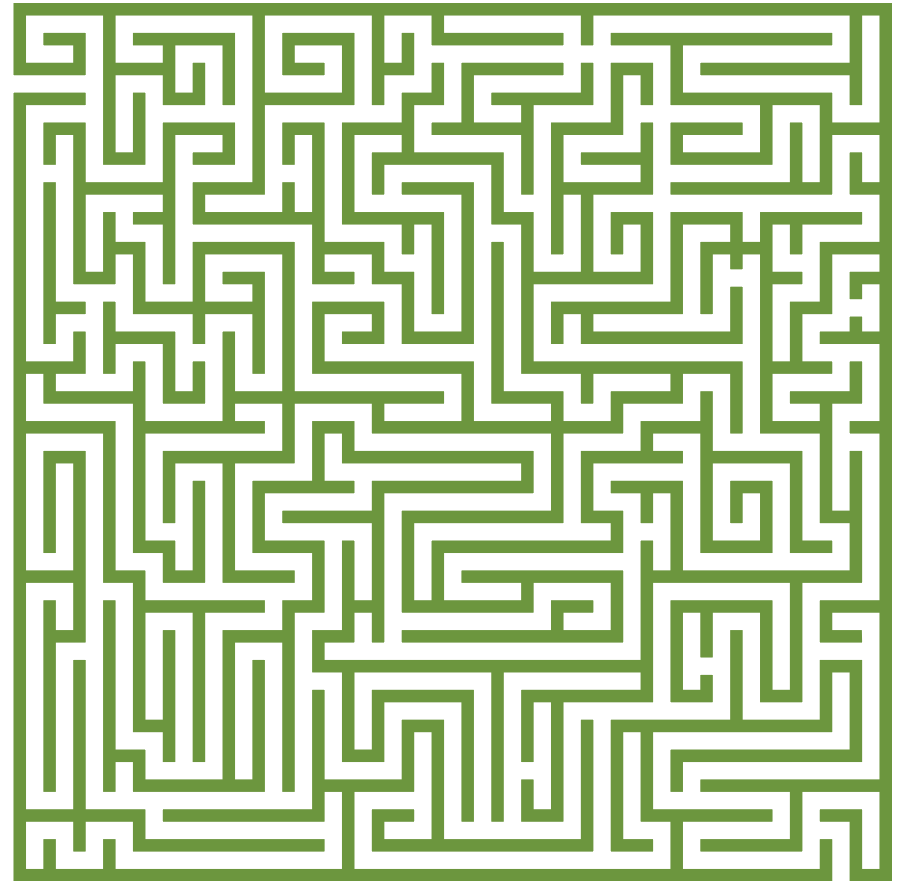
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### Activity 11: The Maze

Test your patience by trying to do this maze



## Activity 12: How Much Willpower Do You Have?

Answer the following questions to find out how much will-power you have

Question	Yes Definitely	Maybe	Probably Not	Definitely Not
Your doctor tells you to follow a strict dietary regime that involves eating no chocolate or sweets for a month. Will you follow your doctor's advice?				
Tomorrow you will have an important examination and you have to revise, but a friend of yours calls you and invites you to a party. Do you say no to the invitation and revise all night instead?				
You have signed up to an exercise class in order to get fitter. The course will last 4 months and it will be very hard work. Will you attend all the lessons?				
Your girlfriend or boyfriend is going away for a whole year. Will you stay together?				
You had to get to an important meeting, but the bus broke down. Would you walk there instead?				
You are at your friend's house and you notice they have left their diary on their bed whilst they have gone to the shops. Do you leave it where it is and not look at it?				
You can have a burger or a salad for dinner. You already had a burger for lunch, and you're trying to be healthier. Do you have the salad?				
Your parents have hidden the Christmas presents in a really obvious place and you find them. Do you leave them where they are and not look at them?				

If you answered mainly 'Yes' or 'Maybe' to the questions then you have lots of willpower – Well done!

If you answered mainly 'Probably not' or 'Definitely not' to the questions then you don't have much willpower and this is a character strength you need to work on!

# My Thoughts

Good things come to those who wait because.....

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It is important to be patient and have willpower sometimes because....

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Five times I have shown patience:

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③

④

⑤



# What Does it Mean?

## Important words

### Character

is who you are. It is what makes you.....you. It is what you believe in and how you act with others and when on your own. It is your values and your virtues.

### Character trait

a feature of an individual or group of people, it tells you about their personality.

### Virtue

a quality that is considered desirable in a person, all the good things about you that can be used to describe your character

### The Eight Character Traits

#### Being determined

the ability to keep going whatever happens

#### Having a dream

having an aspiration, ambition or goal

#### Having courage

the ability to do the right thing even when it is difficult

#### Having patience

The capacity to accept or tolerate delay, problems, or suffering without becoming annoyed or anxious.

#### Helping others

Make it easier or possible for someone to do something by offering them help

#### Saving for the future

the quality of using money and other resources carefully and not wastefully

#### Thinking creatively

the use of imagination or original ideas to create something new

#### Working together

the combined action of a group, especially when effective and efficient

### Other Character Traits

#### Ambitious

a person with a strong desire to want to achieve something or reach a certain goal

#### Anxious

a person that is often worried that something may go wrong or not as planned

#### Charismatic

a character trait that includes traits such as leadership, charm and persuasiveness, an ability to inspire other people. You might often hear people say that a certain person is a charismatic leader; it means that people are naturally drawn to them, they are inspiring.

#### Compassionate

a person with the desire to help others

#### Delayed gratification

the ability of a person to wait for something that they want and not get it straight away

#### Doggedness

determined in effort, a very determined person

#### Endurance

finishing an unpleasant or difficult activity or process without giving up

#### Fortitude

being courageous or brave in the face of something difficult, painful or scary

#### Frugal

being very careful with your money, buying only things that are needed

#### Honesty

the ability to be truthful, sincere and fair

#### Humble

to feel that you are no more important than anyone else no matter what the situation, even you are the Queen or richest person in the world

#### Humility

the ability to be modest and respectful

#### Innovative

a person that starts something new, creates something or comes up with new ideas or ways to do something

**Inspirational**

making you feel hopeful or encouraged

**Integrity**

the possession of firm principles, for example if you are willing to do the right thing – even if nobody is watching

**Optimistic**

being positive and confident about what will happen

**Prudent**

acting with and showing care for the future, a person who is careful and sensible

**Resilient**

the ability to recover quickly from something, for example change, misfortune, illness

**Risk averse**

the dislike of, and desire, to avoid any type of risk

**Sense of humour**

the ability to face danger, difficulty, uncertainty and fear

**Tenacious**

a person that has an opinion in a determined way

**Thrifty**

a person that is careful with money, avoids waste

**Tolerance**

the ability to be able to accept difference

**Will power**

ability to control your own thoughts and how you behave

**Other words you may not know****Academic**

relating to school or higher education

**Aspiration**

a strong desire to achieve something

**Audit**

looking at previous records to see if they are correct

**Credit card**

a card issued by a bank for the purchase of items on credit – money that a person does not physically have but they are borrowing from a bank and will pay interest on (a percentage of extra money on top of what they are paying for an item)

**Entrepreneur**

a person who organises and works in a business, and takes on a financial (money) risk doing so.

**Humiliation**

to feel very embarrassed or ashamed

**Mentor**

a person who advises and guides people

**Personal statement**

a piece of writing about you to describe your character, what you are good at and your passion, normally to give to universities or potential employers.

**Philanthropist**

a person who makes charitable donations to help others, in time or money

**Self-reflection**

to think about yourself and reflect on who you are

**Reflect**

to think about

**Resources**

an available supply that can

be drawn on when needed, for example a natural resource is a resource supplied by nature including water, wood and air. Vocational providing skills and education that prepare you for a job

**Volunteer**

a person who does something without receiving money for their work or being forced to do it, normally involves helping other people in some way

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Meadowhead School, Sheffield

Saltley School, Birmingham

For more information about the My Character Project or the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, please contact [t.j.harrison@bham.ac.uk](mailto:t.j.harrison@bham.ac.uk) or see [www.jubileecentre.ac.uk](http://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk).

