

Introduction

To Virtues



Flourishing is living the best life you can, for the benefit of yourself and society, using virtues and good character.



Virtues are positive personal traits that make up a person's character.

Activity 1

What is a good life?



Aim(s)

- To think about what a *Good Life* means to the young people.



Resources

- *Good Life* title cards.
- *Life Features* cards.



Delivery Guide



Depending on the number of young people you are working with, you can do this in several small groups (ideally no more than 3 or 4 people in each group), in pairs, or individually.

Ask the young people to think about what a *good life* means to them. What features would it contain?

Give one set of *Good Life title cards* and one set of *Life Features cards* to each group/pairing of young people and ask them to spread the title cards out in front of them:

Very
important for
a good life

Slightly
important for
a good life

Not at all
important for
a good life

They can then spread the rest of the *Life Features cards* out. Go through them and check understanding, if necessary.

They need to put each of the different small *Life Feature cards* under the relevant headings depending on whether they think they are important for a good life, slightly important, or not at all important for a good life. If the young people think anything has been missed out, they can write it on pieces of paper and add it in to the activity.

Once they have done this, give the young people an opportunity to share what they have chosen to put under each heading, and to discuss the choices they made.

Ask them where they placed the card saying '*be a good person*'. What category was it in, and why did they put it there? Is it important to be a good person? Do you need to be a good person to have a good life?

If no,

Some things that may come up include:

- There are loads of bad people who have good lives.
- Money and a job is what makes a good life, and you don't need to be a good person to get those.
- You have to be bad to get on in life.

If yes, why?

Some things that might come up include:

- So that you can have good relationships; friends, family, boyfriend/girlfriend etc.
- Because we should all care for one another.
- Because if you're being a bad person, you can't really be happy – it always causes problems.
- Life is about more than just 'things'.

This should prompt a conversation about what they think is a 'good' life; is it just having money and 'things'? Most people would argue definitely not – we need things like love, purpose, connection and good relationships, and these come from being a good person.

Points to highlight

- Having a good life is not just about having money and material things, although these things may still be important.
- A fully rounded good life can be called flourishing.
- Being a good person is important.
- Different people have different ideas of what a good life is, but there are lots of common things.

Activity 2

What does it mean to be a good person?

Aim(s)

- To discuss what it means to be a good person.
- To introduce the concept of virtues.
- To think about one's own virtues.

Resources

- *What does it mean to be a good person?* text on a flipchart or whiteboard.
- *Virtues* Information Sheet.
- *What Virtues Do I Have?* Worksheet.*

Delivery Guide

Part I

Ask the young people what they think it means to be a good person and see what their initial thoughts are.

Talk through the prompts below (it can help if you put them on a flipchart or interactive whiteboard). For each prompt, ask what the young people think and why.

Is being a good person:

- **To do as you're told?**
Point to highlight: This might be part of it; but doing what you're told isn't good if you're told to commit an armed robbery, or hurt someone.
- **To do no harm?**
Point to highlight: This is also part of it – we don't want to hurt people. But maybe sometimes you have to hurt someone for the greater good; for instance if a child runs into the road, you might have to hurt them when pulling them out of the road to stop them being hit by a car.
- **To do the right thing?**
Point to highlight: The right thing depends on the situation. You can't always have a rule that covers every situation, so you have to make a decision about what is the right choice.

Part II



Facilitators can take part in this activity along with the young people, sharing which 4 virtues they think they have and which they'd like to develop.

Explain that, to do the right thing, we use positive personal traits called character strengths or virtues. There are lots of different virtues:



Ask if the young people know what any of them mean. Go through the virtue definitions. Give them the *Virtue Information Sheet* if helpful. Which virtues do they think they have?

Using the *What Virtues Do I Have?* worksheet, ask them to find 4 virtues they think they already have and put a tick next to them. They should then think of 4 virtues they'd like to work on improving or developing, and put a circle round each virtue.

Explain that over the next few weeks they're going to focus on exploring virtues through a variety of different activities.

* Facilitators may wish to keep worksheets for the young people to refer to when undertaking the Review section, or to display them on walls.

Points to highlight

- Virtues are positive personal traits that make up our character.
- There are many different virtues. We will all naturally have some of the virtues, yet need to work on others.
- Over the next few weeks they will be doing more work on virtues and who they are as people.



Extension Activities

You could look at stories – these could be anything from texts you are looking at in other lessons, books they are reading, films they have seen or stories in the media – to identify the virtues shown. Similarly, you could choose one of the virtues and ask them to find a story where this is shown.



Further Resources

The *A Framework for Character Education in Schools* explains the concept of virtues and character in an education context in more detail, although it is probably more suited to facilitators/teachers than young people: www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/publications (Available 8/16)



Links to Other Areas of the Curriculum

Various:

The extension activity can link with a number of different lessons, including History, Citizenship and English.

Literacy:

Virtues vocabulary can be linked with English.

