“That’s not fair!”
Allan Hoyle

If you’ve ever worked with children or had children, you will recognize the indignant tone of a 10 year old: “That’s not fair!” That voice is not silenced by age or across decades and centuries. It is hardwired into our brains through our neural networks. We are meant to be a civilized, caring society.

“That’s not fair!” are the words that draw the demarcation line between self service and a much bigger idea that tells us the world has the capacity to be a better and more caring place. We are interdependent as people, and justice rests in everyone’s hands. We are an interdependent species. It is a leap of faith to an ideal that says the world, and experience in it, can be better.

Fairness is an attribute that is integral to our sense of right, our sense of wrong, and our sense of caring. It aims for compassion, but sometimes needs to settle for justice. When fairness doesn’t happen through justice, it calls upon charity to support its work. It will not be side-lined.

From the voices of children to the voices of protesters around the world, to the quiet inner voice inside each one of us that we call ‘conscience’ ‘fairness’ is the triumph of faith in each other, the future and ourselves that continues to reshape our world into one where inclusiveness, compassion and justice can prevail. And where it doesn’t, giving and activism act as models for our children and our youth to never be satisfied with anything less than fairness.
Compassion, Courage, Fairness, Honesty, Inclusiveness, Initiative, Integrity, Optimism, Perseverance, Respect, Responsibility

Noteworthy articles gleaned from other character sources we monitor

**L I V E**

*Shopping Carts and Rationalizations*
Michael Josephson Commentary

When we think about character, we tend to envision really big things, like taking heavy risks, committing bold acts of integrity, being grandly generous, or making tough sacrifices.

Such noble choices indicate character, but for the most part, our integrity is revealed in much smaller events, like apologizing when we’re wrong, giving to causes we believe in, being honest when it may be embarrassing, or returning shopping carts.

One of my favorite stories is about a father who asked his son to return a cart they had just used. The son protested, “C’mon, Dad. There are carts all over. No one returns them. That’s why they hire people to collect them.”

After a short argument, mom chimed in, “For heaven's sake, it’s no big deal. Let's go.”

Dad was about to surrender when he saw an elderly couple walking together to return their cart.

He said, “Son, there are two kinds of people in this world: those who put their carts away and those who don’t. We’re the kind who return theirs. Now go return the cart.” Which kind are you?

**L E A R N**

*Every Good Decision Starts with a Stop*
Michael Josephson Commentary

More often than we like, most of us face choices that can have serious and lasting impact on our lives. Do we go along with the crowd? Do we tell someone off, quit a job, or end a relationship? Unfortunately, these decisions are not preceded by a drum roll warning us that the stakes are high. Even worse, we often don’t have a lot of time to figure out what to do.

It’s no surprise that most bad decisions – the ones that mess up our lives – are made impulsively or without sufficient reflection.

To read more from this article, CLICK HERE!

**W O R K**

*Good Leadership starts with Solid Values*
Harvey Schachter

Leadership in these complex and turbulent times requires an amalgam of competencies, character and commitment. We, of course, know a great deal about competencies – 90 per cent of leadership development over the past few decades has focused on competencies and skills.

To read more from this article, CLICK HERE!

**P L A Y**

*“Being a Good Sportsperson”*
TVO Parents

Part of good sportsmanship or what is now known as being a good sportsperson means, behaving in positive ways. From winning and losing with good manners to respecting teammates, opponents and officials, children can learn positive social behaviours and valuable life skills while participating in sport.

To read more from this article, CLICK HERE!
Compassion, Courage, Fairness, Honesty, Inclusiveness, Initiative, Integrity, Optimism, Perseverance, Respect, Responsibility
Let's be honest. Ethics is not for wimps.

It’s not easy being a good person.

It’s not easy to be honest when it might be costly, to play fair when others cheat, or to keep inconvenient promises.

It’s not easy to stand up for our beliefs and still respect differing viewpoints.

It’s not easy to control powerful impulses, to be accountable for our attitudes and actions, to tackle unpleasant tasks, or to sacrifice the now for later.

It’s not easy to bear criticism and learn from it without getting angry, to take advice, or to admit error.

It’s not easy to feel genuine remorse and apologize sincerely, or to accept apologies graciously and truly forgive.

It’s not easy to stop feeling like a victim, to resist cynicism, or to make the best of every situation.

It’s not easy to be consistently kind, to think of others first, to judge generously, or to give the benefit of the doubt.

It’s not easy to be grateful or to give without concern for reward or gratitude.

It’s not easy to fail and still keep trying, to learn from failure, to risk failing again, to start over, to lose with grace, or to be glad of another’s success.

It’s not easy to look at ourselves honestly and be accountable, to avoid excuses and rationalizations, or to resist temptations.

No, being a person of character isn’t easy. That’s why it’s such a lofty goal and an admirable achievement.

DON'T JUST DO SOMETHING, STAND THERE!

In a world of “act now, think later,” pausing feels like a luxury we rarely have. Our natural reactions are to get up and move. Make a decision! Start the ball rolling! In some cases we’re even rewarded for our ability to be fast-forward thinkers. What happens when we take the time to listen to our inner dialogue and think? How can it affect our next move? Thinking before we act or react tends to be in our best interest. Why is that? How do we create more pauses in our lives? How can taking this pause help our outcomes with the choices we make?

When we touch a fire too many times, we learn to stand back and wait for the flames to subside. Can we pause too long? Can it slide into procrastination or stalled ideas? Are we letting an opportunity slip away? What is the perfect balance of pause and action? To read the rest of this article, click above on the pause button.
Siblings help northern students

Sometimes, your home can look a little disheveled with backpacks and school supplies taking over your kitchen table as the final days of summer break count down.

As the first day of school nears, it’s even worse for Aurora’s Harrison family, who can’t see the carpet in their dining and living rooms.

Over the summer months, siblings Jordyn, 21, and Brooke, 17, have collected and filled more than 800 backpacks with school supplies that will be sent to three fly-in First Nations communities — Summer Beaver, Sandy Lake and Fort Hope — in Northern Ontario, more than 600 kilometres north of Thunder Bay.

The pair teamed with the North-South Partnership for Children, an organization that matches residents in southern Ontario with 30 remote First Nations communities in northwestern Ontario.

“I never knew there was so much disparity between us in the south and those kids living up there,” Jordyn said. “I don’t think they know what’s coming or what they’re in for.”

Some families living on the reserve still don’t have running water, Jordyn added.

Each backpack is labeled and stuffed with age and gender-appropriate books, supplies and essentials.

Brooke created a backpack assembly line in the basement of the family home, where friends and family members stuffed backpacks with supplies from one of four filled filling cabinets and a pile of books spread out across the unused pool table. The backpacks were then labeled with a school and grade and placed in a colour-coded box for one of the three communities.

Donations poured in all summer from friends, family and neighbours.

In addition to school supplies, the Harrisons also collected about 30 boxes of bedding for the Summer Beaver community and more than 200 pairs of shoes, classroom supplies and reader sets for the Sandy Lake community.

“There is no more room to open boxes to fill backpacks,” Brooke and Jordyn’s mother, Gina, said. “It’s like a shuffleboard where you move numbers from side to side and up and down.”

The Ontario Provincial Police donated a trailer and members will drive the 22 hours to an airplane hangar where the donations will be flown into the communities.

“I think we might need a second trip,” Brooke said. “I never thought it would be this big. They are kids and fellow Canadians. There is no reason why we shouldn’t do our part. Many Canadian’s don’t understand what’s going on up north.”
As the end of the year approaches, whether it be for Christmas, Kwanza, Hanukkah or other traditions, it is a time when many of us gather with friends and family to enjoy good company and good food.

As you gather this year, CanadaHelps encourages you to start a new family tradition focused on charitable giving.

Take the time to start a conversation about what donating means to your family and to inspire the young people in your life to become the next generation of Canadian donors!

Here are some tips to help you get started:

1 - **Talk to your children or younger relatives about the causes that matter to you** and why you choose to support them. Discuss all of the great things that charities do in all sectors (healthcare, animals, the environment, education, international development, social services etc...).

2 - **Visit or volunteer at a charity you've supported** in the past to see first-hand the important work they do with your donations. Be sure to set up a time to visit in advance - service demands go up for many charities around holidays.

3 - Make this time of year the time that you **set your annual giving budget**. Decide the amount that works for you and how you would like to split that amount among the causes you support.

4 - **Ask everyone to research a charity they would like to support**. Before a meal, go around the table and ask everyone to say a few words about the charity they chose and the impact that organization has on the community.

5 - **Buy everyone in your family a CanadaHelps Charity Gift Card**. You select the card and the amount, and your family members select the charity that matters most to them. It’s a great way to get young people used to making donations!

6 – Consider instead of giving gifts to family members (who agree to it) that you **make a donation on their behalf** to a cause they would like to support.

7 - Character Community Foundation of York Region uses CanadaHelps for online donations so if you would like to **support the work we do**, please visit our giving page by clicking on the link below, and make a donation.

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**Character in the news...** Articles from YorkRegion.com courtesy of the Metroland Media group.

**Winners Embrace Good Character**
[Click here to read this article](#)

**Peace Medal goes to Character Group**
[Click here to read this article](#)

**LETTER: Good Samaritan makes Vaughan woman's day**
[Click here to read this article](#)

**IT'S ALL GOOD: Other people don't decide our fate, we do**
[Click here to read this article](#)
Each year, YMCA’s across the country and the world celebrate people who think globally but act locally.

The YMCA Peace Medallion Award honours those individuals and groups who consider the health of the entire planet and take action in their own communities and cities by championing a cause, inspiring people to get involved, creating positive change and making our communities a peaceful place to live.

During YMCA Peace Week from November 19 to 26, 2011, local peacemakers will receive a special and unique medallion at ceremonies across the GTA. The Character Community Foundation of York Region is honoured to have their Character Council members chosen as this year’s recipient for Richmond Hill!

This group of committed volunteers work together to provide tools and resources to enhance Character development across all sectors of the community. Additional York Region winners are Don Cousens for Markham and Deputy Mayor Danny Wheeler for Georgina. The Richmond Hill Medal presentation ceremony is Thursday, November 24 at 6pm.

To read more about this award, click the ymca inspire peace logo

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**Mark your Calendars**

The Character Community Foundation both organizes and participates in public outreach activities throughout the year.

- Wednesday, April 25, 2012 - Character Awards Celebration, Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts
- Wednesday June 13, 2012 - Annual General Meeting

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The Character Community Foundation is a registered charitable organization. Donors are encouraged to give to the Character Community Foundation of York Region by visiting www.charactercommunity.com

Registered charity #88722 1406 RR0001