



The Tug For Life event is a reminder of the daily challenges we face in which we must steady the course, persevere against the forces of resistance and recognize the achievement and inner strength we develop with personal challenge.

Challenge is a part of life; adjusting your emotions, attitudes and reaction to challenge is entirely within your control. How we respond to adversity and challenge help us to develop good character traits and establish our personal boundaries and awareness as to who we are and what we will become. Through challenge and adversity we also learn the importance of expressing love, kindness and appreciation.

40 Physical & Mental Health Benefits of Exercise

Most people start exercising as a physical fitness goal—usually to lose weight, improve physical health, or tone up. And this is great. But, many are unaware of the incredible mental health benefits to be gained through regular exercise. As I like to say, “We start exercising for the physical benefits, but we keep exercising for the mental benefits.” I know that’s how it has been for me.

-Dr. Christina Hibbert

Physical Health Benefits of Exercise

1. Weight loss and weight control
2. Increased muscle strength and muscle mass (which helps burn calories and fat)
3. Increased energy
4. Improved flexibility and movement
5. Lower risk of some types of cancer (Exercising at least 4 hours per week has been shown to lower risk of breast cancer by 37 %!)
6. Reduced risk of Diabetes 2 and metabolic syndrome
7. Improved immune system, for overall better health
8. Increased “good” cholesterol to keep blood flowing smoothly
9. Lower risk of a heart attack and stroke
10. Helps smokers quit with higher success rates
11. Strength training & weight-bearing exercise (like walking, jogging, etc.), promotes stronger bones (which is particularly helpful for women entering menopause, when bone density is lost)
12. In short, Exercise can increase your life expectancy by an average of 7 years! (One study in New England Journal of Medicine showed that asymptomatic women who weren’t fit had twice the risk of death than those who were fit!)



Mental Health Benefits of Exercise

Countless research studies show that exercise has incredible benefits not just for physical health, but for all areas of health, including mental, emotional, intellectual, and yes, even social well-being.

1. Regular aerobic exercise increases levels of serotonin and dopamine in the brain, which is linked with improved mood
2. Aerobic exercise increases endorphins, or the “feel good” chemicals in the body, improving mood and energy
3. Exercise enhances the mind’s ability to withstand daily hassles and stressors and to regulate itself
4. Research shows exercise can alleviate symptoms of Pre-Menstrual Syndrome and Depression in women
5. Regular exercise has been shown equal to antidepressant use in treating Major Depressive Disorder
6. Exercise is associated with deeper relaxation and better quality of sleep (which protects the brain and increases energy)
7. Strength training has been shown to decrease tension and worry in the body and mind
8. Studies show exercise reduces/treats and may *prevent* anxiety and panic attacks
9. Exercise increases mental clarity and efficiency
10. Improves cognitive functioning in middle age and beyond
11. Exercise is associated with better thinking, learning, and judgment
12. It can help you tap into intuition and creativity
13. Exercise increases assertiveness and enthusiasm for life
14. Studies show exercise leads to a higher quality sex life
15. Group or partner exercise increases social activity and decreases feelings of loneliness and isolation
16. Those who exercise regularly tend to have a **better body-image**
17. Regular exercise is associated with **higher self-esteem**
18. Overall, exercise is one of the best ways to improve **happiness and life satisfaction**.

For more information on the Benefits of Exercise from above visit:

<http://www.drchristinahibbert.com/personal-growth-and-self-actualization/physical-2/40-physical-mental-health-benefits-of-exercise/>



Let's talk about boundaries

It is important for a child to learn about boundaries for their safety and protection. Boundaries evolve and change as we mature; identifying and being cognitive of our personal boundaries is critical for a strong self-esteem, or self-image. Maintaining personal boundaries communicates to others that we have self-worth and self-respect. Without awareness to personal boundaries, children and adults are more vulnerable to being manipulated or violated by others.

How do we establish healthy personal boundaries?

Referenced from Z. Hereford (www.essentiallifefskills.net/about.html)

Know that you have a right to personal boundaries. You not only have the right, but you must take responsibility for how you allow others to treat you. Your boundaries act as filters permitting what is acceptable in your life and what is not. If you don't have boundaries that protect and define you, as in a strong sense of identity, you tend to derive your sense of worth from others. To avoid this situation, set clear and decisive limits so that others will respect them, then be willing to do whatever it takes to enforce them. Interestingly, it's been shown that those who have weak boundaries themselves tend to violate the boundaries of others.

Recognize that other people's needs and feelings are not more important than your own.

Think about how you feel before joining in an activity or conversation prior to giving into peer pressure.

Learn to say no. Many of us are people-pleasers and often put ourselves at a disadvantage by trying to accommodate everyone. We don't want to be selfish, so we put our personal needs on the back burner and agree to do things that may not be beneficial to our well-being. Actually, a certain amount of "selfishness" is necessary for having healthy personal boundaries. You do not do anyone any favors, least of all yourself, by trying to please others at your own expense.

Identify the actions and behaviors that you find unacceptable. Let others know when they've crossed the line, acted inappropriately, or disrespected you in any way. Do not be afraid to tell others when you need emotional and physical space. Allow yourself to be who you really are without pressure from others to be anything else. Know what actions you may need to take if your wishes aren't respected.

Trust and believe in yourself. You are the highest authority on you. You know yourself best. You know what you need, want, and value. Don't let anyone else make the decisions for you. Healthy boundaries make it possible for you to respect your strengths, abilities and individuality as well as those of others. An unhealthy imbalance occurs when you encourage neediness, or are needy; want to be rescued, or are the rescuer, or when you choose to play the victim.



Understanding the development of our own character helps us to define who we are and who we want to become. Establishing our personal boundaries help us to live into those qualities and adhere to our character convictions.

Character Quote

“Courage. Kindness. Friendship. Character. These are the qualities that define us as human beings, and propel us, on occasion, to greatness.”

— R.J. Palacio, Wonder

Can you think of an experience in your life when you were able to demonstrate your good Character?

Character reflects who a person is on the inside. A person’s beliefs and actions show others his or her character. Respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, perseverance, fairness, and caring, are qualities of good character.

Character Traits

Respect means recognizing the value of all people, property and the environment. Respectful behavior includes taking someone’s feelings, needs, thoughts, ideas, wishes and choices into consideration without negative judgement.

Acceptance means receiving people for who they are without judging their beliefs or values which may be different from your own.

Honesty is speaking and living the truth in your thoughts, words and actions.

Courtesy is showing your polite manners, gestures and conduct.

Positive Attitude means your thoughts are words are positive and hopeful towards everyday experiences.



Open-mindedness means you are open to accept new and different ideas or the opinions of others.

Responsibility means having the accountability or ability to answer to something that you have been placed in control or power over its completion, success or safety.

Initiative is having the power or ability to begin or to follow through energetically with a plan or goal.

Citizenship means being a loyal member of a group, community and/or country.

Patriotism means to show deep respect and loyalty to your country.

Loyalty is being faithful and true to your commitments, family and friends.

Caring is showing kindness, support and feelings of concern for the needs of others.

Compassion is having the ability to understand and share emotion towards the pain of others.

Gratitude is a feeling of being thankful or grateful for the action of someone.

Integrity means complete and total honesty, which causes a person to do the right thing, even if no one else will know.

Fairness is the act or condition of being fair, or free from bias or injustice.

Courage is the quality of mind or spirit that enables a person to face difficulty, danger, pain, etc., without fear. Showing courage can also be a moral act of doing what is right.

Kindness means to be nice, and considerate to others.

Friendship is a relationship enjoyed by two or more people based on mutual respect and support.

Sharing is giving a portion of your time, talents or possessions.

Empathy means understanding the feelings, thoughts and experiences of another person.

Cooperation is the act of working together with another person or a group for a team effort or common goal.



Patience is having the ability to wait calmly without complaining until your turn or time is up.

Self-Confidence is an awareness of your personal strengths and ability to meet life's daily challenges.

Nonviolence is behaving in a non-threatening manner to solve problems and work with people.

Self-Control is demonstrating restraint from having bad behavior and expressing unkind thoughts in written text or verbal outbursts.

Perseverance means continuing to try to overcome obstacles rather than giving up.

Enthusiasm means being very excited, interested, and happy about something.

Resourcefulness means to act effectively or imaginatively, to resolve problems or accomplish goals.

**Think about your personal boundaries and how they protect you
and help to define your character.**



Resources

- American Psychological Association (APA)
apa.org
- How do we establish healthy personal boundaries? Z. Hereford
essentiallifskills.net/about.html
- Dr. Christina Hibbert
drchristinahibbert.com/personal-growth-and-self-actualization/physical-2/40-physical-mental-health-benefits-of-exercise/
- Positive Learning Systems
positivelearningsystems.com/character-links/
- The National Center for Emotional Wellness
nationalcenterforemotionalwellness.org
- What Are Personal Boundaries? How Do I Get Some? By Darlene Lancer, JD, MFT
psychcentral.com/lib/what-are-personal-boundaries-how-do-i-get-some/

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