



*Building Our Future Through
Education, History and Culture!*

JANUARY 2016 VIRTUES



Bringing Virtues to Life

Compliments of:

Virgin Islands Department of Education
Division of Virgin Islands Cultural Education

Learning More About the Virtues Project

What is The Virtues Project? The Virtues Project was founded in 1991 by Linda Kavelin Popov, Dr. Dan Popov, and the late John Kaveline. It is a global grass roots initiative to inspire the practice of virtues in all aspects of life; it has inspired and mobilized thousands of families, educators, leaders, and employees to commit acts of service and generosity, to heal violence with virtues, and to create safe and caring communities.

What's the difference between virtues and values? Values are what we value and care about. They could be anything. We may value getting rich and famous, we may value power over others, but that doesn't mean we will have good character. Values are culture-specific because what some families or cultures value, others don't. Virtues are much more elemental than values. While values are culture-specific, virtues are universally valued to all cultures. Virtues are the essence of who we are; it's what's good about us. It's our inner quality of character, which sometimes is there waiting to be awakened. They are the content of our character and the basis of genuine happiness.

Why teach virtues? Many teachers and administrators are finding that applying the strategies of The Virtues Project is transforming the culture in their schools by helping them to create a total environment of caring and respect. They have replaced discouragement with empowerment, having discovered that words such as "lazy" "retarded" "stupid" "unacceptable" were literally demoralizing and dis-courage-ing their students. When they filled their classrooms with encouraging words, such as "helpful", "excellent", "compassionate", self-disciplined", "integrity", and "kind", they found that these behaviors flourished.

How has the Virtues Project continued to be so successful? Its success is credited to the teaching and application of their Five Strategies. They are the signature contribution of The Virtues Project. These strategies are important because they help us to live more reverent, purposeful lives, to raise children of compassion and idealism, and create a culture of character in our families, schools, and workplaces. Each of the five strategies outlined below has been or will be thoroughly discussed in the upcoming months:

1. Speak the Language of Virtues
2. Recognize Teachable Moments
3. Set Clear Boundaries
4. Honor the Spirit
5. Offer Companionship

What is Recognize Teachable Moments? This is a continuation from December 2015 Virtues Project. Haim Ginott said, "In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child (person) humanized or de-humanized." It is important to turn stumbling blocks into stepping stones, by taking responsibility to clear up mistakes, by being open to learning from challenges, and by replacing shaming with naming virtues.

ACT with TACT is very useful in giving feedback to children and adults, in addressing goals or behaviors. It is a tool used by managers, administrators, teachers, parents to give performance feedback to employees, students, and children. In doing this, you are making a “positivity sandwich”. You are using the power of Virtues Language.

*Always remember that humility is the goal, NOT humiliation.
NEVER use it to be sarcastic and / or degrade someone.*

ACT with TACT (Positivity Sandwich):

1. Acknowledge 2. Correct 3. Thank

1. Tell the individual about qualities and behaviors in them that you APPRECIATE, which is called naming their STRENGTH VIRTUES.

For example:

I honor your drive of perseverance and determination that you possess in completing your assignments, especially as we are short staff.

2. Tell the person what you feel would be helpful to CHANGE or CORRECT, which is called naming their GROWTH VIRTUES.

For example:

I am encouraging you to be purposeful in ensuring your work is neat and with minimal errors.

3. Save some of the best for last by *THANKSGIVING* them for what you most appreciate. End on a positive note!

For example:

Your diligence in completing your tasks are commendable and appreciated. It is a joy working with you.

PUTTING THE POSITIVITY SANDWICH TOGETHER

I honor your drive of perseverance and determination that you possess in completing your assignments, especially as we are short staff. I am encouraging you to be purposeful in ensuring your work is neat and with minimal errors. Your diligence in completing your tasks is commendable and appreciated. It is a joy working with you.

If any additional information is needed and/or to request a presentation for PTA, PTSA, staff meeting, church group, etc. who should be contacted? Feel free to contact Virtues Project Facilitator, Mrs. Arlene L. Pinney-Benjamin at alpbenjamin@doe.vi or 340-774-0100 x: 2804 at the Virgin Islands Department of Education Division of Virgin Islands Cultural Education.

JANUARY 2016

VIRTUES OF THE MONTH:

. Perseverance

I am thankful for the gift of Perseverance. It keeps me going.
(January 3 - January 9, 2016)

. Determination

I am thankful for the gift of Determination. It is the wind in my sails.
(January 10 - January 16, 2016)

. Diligence

I am thankful for the gift of Diligence. It energizes my life.
(January 17 - January 23, 2016)

. Purposefulness

I am thankful for the gift of Purposefulness. It gives my life true value.
(January 24 - January 30, 2016)

Upcoming

FEBRUARY 2016

VIRTUES OF THE MONTH:

. Justice

I am thankful for the gift of Justice. It is the guardian of my integrity.

(January 31 - February 6, 2016)

. Idealism

I am thankful for the gift of Idealism. It helps me to realize my dreams.

(February 7 - February 13, 2016)

. Peacefulness

I am thankful for the gift of Peacefulness. It allows me to be an instrument of grace.

(February 14 - February 20, 2016)

. Forgiveness

I am thankful for the gift of Forgiveness. It lightens my spirit.

(February 21 - February 27, 2016)

PERSEVERANCE

Perseverance is the will to carry on. Once we discern our true direction, we stay the course for however long it takes, regardless of obstacles that arise. When creativity inspires us, we do the work required to bring it to fruition. We patiently pursue our goals, remaining steadfast and focused. We persist with a task until it is completed. People can trust us to finish what we start. When our relationships are tested, we have the commitment to work things through. We are determined to succeed.

“Just don’t give up trying to do what you really want to do.
Where there’s love and inspiration, I don’t think you can go wrong.”

Ella Fitzgerald

The Practice of Perseverance

... I practice Perseverance when I ...

Have a strong sense of purpose
Have the will to overcome obstacles
Remain committed to what I want to do
Am determined to finish what I start
Am trustworthy in my relationships
Do what it takes to stay the course

Affirmation

I have perseverance. I finish what I start. I keep a steady pace in what I choose to do.
I am loyal and committed.

CULTURAL PROVERBS

De longest way ‘round is de shortest way home
If yoh tek yoh time, yoh will fine ants guts.

Meanings

Take the time necessary to complete a task and it will pay off in the end.
If you persevere, you will reach your desired goal.

FOLKTALE

Fow-Cock and the Drummer Cockroach

Explore how the perseverance of the man paid off to rid himself of the
“bidi-boom, bidi-bom, bidi, boom, boom, boom”!

Activities with Perseverance



A Story of Perseverance

Share the Aesops Fable of the Tortoise and the Hare and discuss.



Virtues Reflection Questions

- ❶ When in your life have you been like the Hare?
- ❷ When in your life have you been like the Tortoise?
- ❸ How can you tell if you want to commit to a new friend?
- ❹ What qualities do you look for in a friend?
- ❺ How do the following jobs need perseverance? What would happen if people in these roles did not persevere?

Parent
Fire-fighter
Professional Athlete
Teacher
Inventor



Drawing Perseverance

Draw a picture of someone doing a job that takes perseverance.



Poster Points

- ❶ Keep on keepin' on.
- ❷ I finish what I start.
- ❸ Riding the waves.
- ❹ A winner never quits.



Quotable Quotes

"Success comes in cans. Failure comes in can'ts." Fred Seely

"Just don't give up trying to do what you really want to do. Where there's love and inspiration, I don't think you can go wrong." Ella Fitzgerald

"Never give up!"
Otto Frank (Anne Frank's father)

"The sense of obligation to continue is present in all of us. A duty to strive is the duty of us all. I felt a call to that duty." Abraham Lincoln

"Keep on keepin' on." African-American saying

"Nothing in the world can take the place of Persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent...Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent." Anonymous

"Never let me be burdened with sorrow by not starting over." Native American tradition

"Take everything as it comes; the wave passes, deal with the next one." Tom Thomson

"A winner never quits and a quitter never wins." Unknown

FOWL-COCK AND THE DRUMMER COCKROACH

One time there was a man who built a new house. When the house was completed, he furnished it with the best furniture money could buy. But to his great surprise, when he decided to go and live in his house he heard something or someone beating a big drum in his house. He couldn't find out what it was, so he made a bargain with Lizard who said to him, "Yes, I will chase away whatever is beating that drum inside the house, but you must give me a big bag of flies." The man agreed, but Lizard didn't keep his bargain. Instead he ate the flies without removing whatever it was that drummed in the house.

The man then went to Fowl-Cock. He said, "Fowl-Cock, I have just built a house and furnished it, but I cannot live in it because there is something in there beating a gomme drum. I need someone to chase away whatever it is in there. Can you do it?"

"You have come to the right person, Mister," Fowl-Cock answered. "I can do it, but you will have to give me a sack of meal." Since the man was desperate, he agreed.

Fowl-Cock approached the house and heard the drumming, "bidi-boom, bidi-boom, bidi, boom, boom, boom, boom." He entered and followed the sound and found a large drummer cockroach in the corner. Fowl-Cock stretched his neck and picked it up and took it outside. The drumming stopped. The man gave Fowl-Cock his cornmeal, and, in addition, Fowl-Cock swallowed the cockroach. Ever since that day, fowls eat cockroaches and sometimes even lizards, since this was Lizard's punishment for not keeping his bargain.

DETERMINATION

Determination is the power of intent that drives our dreams. It is the strength of will to act with resolve. We focus our energy on a purpose and persevere until we meet our goal. Determination is the commitment to follow through, until we accomplish our purpose. We care about something so much that even when difficulties arise, and things don't come easy, we keep on keeping on. If one path doesn't work, we try another way. We don't allow ourselves to get distracted or to go off track. We complete the tasks we choose to do.

With determination we will succeed.

“The difference between determination and stubbornness is that one comes from a strong will and the other from a strong won't.”

Unknown

The Practice of Determination

... I practice Determination when I ...

Am clear about what I want to accomplish
Am committed to meeting my goals
Focus my full attention on what is important
Do what it takes to follow through
Am flexible and persevering
Finish what I start

Affirmation

I am determined. I set goals and keep going until I achieve them. I get things done.
I stay focused on my purpose.

CULTURAL PROVERBS

Take one bite at a time and you could eat a whole hog.
No matter how much wood slave (gecko) eat [commoheng] wood lice (termites),
they stay building nest.

Meanings

Regardless of the situation or obstacles, remain focused (unperturbed) to complete a task or to get the job done.

FOLKTALE

Broo Nansi and Broo Monkey's Daughter

Broo Monkey was determined not to allow Broo Nansi marry his daughter.
As you read, you will discover how his determination played out!

Activities with Determination



Song

"The Itsy Bitsy Spider went up the water spout.
Out came the rain and washed the spider out.
Out came the sun and dried up all the rain
And the itsy bitsy spider went up the spout
again."

Puppet Play

Using puppets, tell a story of a very discouraged animal who never gets anything done and a friend who encourages the animal to be determined. Show the puppet changing from giving up to having enthusiasm and determination. Example: Character has a hard job to do and feels like giving up. Winter is coming and a bear needs to dig his den. An ant needs to gather food.

Stories of Determination

The Ant and the Grasshopper.
Tell a story about Helen Keller.



Virtues Reflection Questions

- Name a character from a book who succeeded because of his or her determination.
- Name an historical figure who showed great determination. (Examples: Helen Keller, Albert Einstein, Rick Hansen.)
- What would it be like to play a sport without determination? With determination?
- When have you needed the most determination?
- What is your biggest distraction? What helps you to resist it?
- Name three of your personal goals in life.



Drawing Determination

Draw a picture of yourself having achieved one of your life goals with determination.



Poster Points

- I set goals.
- I get things done.
- Keep on keepin' on.
- I finish what I start.



Quotable Quotes

"Keep on keepin' on" African American Proverb

"An eagle misses seventy per cent of his strikes.
Why should I expect to do better?"

Sophy Burnham

"Just do it!" Anonymous

"The difference between determination and stubbornness is that one comes from a strong will and the other from a strong won't."

Anonymous

"Strong reasons make strong actions."

Anonymous

"Character is a perfectly educated will."

Novalis

BROO NANSI AND BROO MONKEY'S DAUGHTER

Broo Monkey had a beautiful daughter whom Nansi wanted to marry. However, Monkey did not think that Nansi was good enough for his daughter. He tried to think of a way to prevent the marriage and at last took the problem to Ground Lizard.

"Ground Lizard," he said, "Listen to this. Nansi wants to marry my daughter, but as you know he is a scoundrel and not on the same social level with my daughter. I don't want her to marry him."



"How are you going to stop him?" Lizard inquired. Monkey looked crestfallen and ashamed.

"That is what I want you to help me with. Think of a way to stop Nansi from marrying my daughter." Well, Ground Lizard is known to be a pretty smart fellow. So he thought awhile and told Monkey:

"I will tell you what to do. Give your daughter a very difficult name and announce that the man who guesses her name will be the man to marry her."

Monkey laughed. He loved the idea. But he was soon sad again. He could not think of a difficult enough name to give his daughter. He appealed to Lizard again:

"But what kind of name could I give my daughter that Nansi can't guess?"

Lizard thought again and said, "How about calling her: Nennen-Kennen-with-a-turned-down-gown. Nansi will never guess that."

Monkey was overjoyed. He said, "Yes, that is what I will call her: Nennen-Kennen-with-a-turned-down-gown."

But Ground Lizard was Nansi's friend. And the first thing he did was to tell Nansi the girl's name. Nansi came now to marry the girl and Monkey said:

"Broo Nansi you can marry my daughter if you can guess her name."

Nansi pretended at first that he did not know her name. He said, "Is it Mak-meh Annie?"

"No."

"Is it Clothilda-Louise?"

"No," Monkey crowed.

"Well, then, it must be Nennen-Kennen-with-a-turned-down-gown."

Monkey was so surprised and furious that he fell off his chair. But he had to keep his word. Nansi had guessed his daughter's name and so he married her.

Pretty soon Nansi and his wife had a baby. One day his wife had to go to wash and left him to put the baby to bed. As soon as she had turned her back, Nansi began to sing:

Hush me baby! Hush me baby!

I got your mama because I was clever.

His wife however heard him singing and turned back. "What are you singing?" she asked.

Nansi replied, "Nothing. I am only singing:

Hush me baby! Hush me baby!

I got your mama because I was clever."

Monkey who had just come into the yard heard this and he said, "Oh, that's how you got my daughter!" And he grabbed the baby away from Nansi and killed Nansi. But as he killed Nansi, the baby fell out of his arms dead.

So the old people say never kill a spider or whatever you are holding in your hand will be sure to break.

DILIGENCE

Diligence is doing what needs to be done with care, concentration, and single-pointed attention. It springs from our desire for excellence. When we work with diligence, we give our absolute best. We are artisans, crafting whatever we create with love. We work meticulously in alignment with our purpose. Diligence is needed in tending our relationships. We choose them with discernment, then give them our full commitment, joy, love, and excellence to keep them strong and alive. Diligence is deeply satisfying to our souls.

“Genius is 10% inspiration, and 90% perspiration.

Thomas Alva Edison

The Practice of Diligence

... I practice Diligence when I ...

Give 100% to the work I do

Strive for excellence

Pay full attention to whatever I am doing

Am conscientious and careful

Work with love

Give my best to my relationships

Affirmation

I am diligent. I work hard. I work carefully. I can be trusted to do a good job.

CULTURAL PROVERBS

Easy bull walk far.

Lil by lil, lil bird build ‘e nest.

Meanings

The race is not always to the swiftest.

Step by step things get done.

FOLKTALE

Broo Tukuma and the Hurricane Warning

Broo Tukuma was diligent to return ‘what he received’ from Broo Nansi!

As you explore this folklore, you will discover what his due diligence caused him and his friends!

Activities with Diligence



Activities with Diligence

Give students a task that involves intricate sorting, such as different shapes of beads, or a sewing project. Invite them to do it with diligence.



Virtues Reflection Questions

- What do dishes look like when they are done without diligence?
- What do dishes look like when they are done with diligence?
- What difference could diligence make in your future success?
- Name three successful people and describe how they showed diligence in their careers.
- Name some jobs in which diligence is essential.
- What would it be like if people did a rushed, careless job of
 - building a bridge
 - performing an operation
 - painting a house
 - working in a laboratory.



Drawing Diligence

On one side draw someone doing an important job without diligence, on the other with diligence.



Poster Points

- Giving my best.
- Giving my all.
- A careful and thorough worker.
- Hard work leads to success.



Quotable Quotes

"Learning is not attained by chance, it must be sought for with ardor and attended to with diligence." Abigail Adams

"Diligence is the mother of good fortune." Cervantes

"Failure and success are not accidents, but the strictest justice." Alexander Smith

"Everything comes to the one who waits, if he works while he waits." Anonymous

"Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity." Elmer Letterman

"The trouble with opportunity is that it often comes disguised as hard work." Anonymous

"Genius is 10% inspiration, 90% perspiration." Thomas Alva Edison

BROO TUKUMA AND THE HURRICANE WARNING

Broo Nansi once made a large paper sign. He went wandering about telling the folks that the king had told him to tell them that a hurricane was coming. He told Tukuma also that a hurricane was coming. He told Tukuma that the people should tie themselves to a huge tree that the wind could not blow down. So Tukuma told Nansi to tie him to a great tree so that when the wind blew his house away, he would be safe.

So Nansi tied Broo Tukuma to a huge tree. Then he took a whip and beat Tukuma to his heart's content.

When Tukuma felt the blows, he cried out, "Broo! Enough! Enough!"

Nansi replied, "When a white man is beating a black man, can the black man tell him 'Enough?'" After beating Tukuma to his satisfaction, Nansi went his way leaving him tied to the tree.

Broo Rabbit came by. Broo Tukuma asked him to let him loose. Broo Rabbit let him go. Tukuma took him to his house and gave him something to eat. When Rabbit finished eating he went away.

Tukuma wanted to catch Nansi to return the beating, but Broo Nansi was too clever. Broo Rabbit plotted with Broo Goat to help him find Broo Nansi. But while Broo Goat tried to trap Nansi, he was being trapped. Broo Nansi killed him and ate him. But Broo Rabbit did not attempt to trap Nansi. When they pursued him, Nansi climbed into a tall tree. Nansi held a sack of pepper and threw some of it into Rabbit's eyes. By the time Rabbit washed his eyes clean, Broo Nansi escaped.

Translated from the Dutch Creole
by Lezmore E. Emanuel

PURPOSEFULNESS

Purposefulness is being aware that each of us is here for a reason. We value our lives by discovering the part we are uniquely meant to play. We discern our intention and focus on it mindfully. We visualize it happening. We set goals and achieve them step by step, resisting distractions. We give each task single-minded concentration and excellence. We invest our full enthusiasm into even the simplest job. In the flow of our lives, there are many turns and unexpected events. Within it all, there are lessons to be learned and gifts to receive. Purposefulness is trusting the journey.

“Our calling is where our deepest gladness and the world’s hunger meet.”

Frederick Buechner

The Practice of Purposefulness

... I practice Purposefulness when I ...

Discern my true calling
Create a clear vision for this time in my life
Set goals for achieving my purpose
Concentrate fully on what I am doing
Enjoy giving excellence to each task
Find the opportunity in every experience

Affirmation

I am purposeful. I am clear about what I am doing and why. I stay focused on my goals.
I know I can accomplish great things.

CULTURAL PROVERB

If yoh put yoh ear ah mango root you will hear crab ah cough.

Meaning

Everything comes to him who waits.

FOLKTALE

Broo Turkey, Broo Duck, and Broo Fowl-Cock

Because of Broo Fowl-Cock’s behavior, both Broo Turkey and Broo Duck joined force and was purposeful to get him. As you read, you will learn his fate.

Activities with Purposefulness



What is Your Purpose?

Name a goal which is important to you and say why.

What Have You Done So Far?

Name three things you have accomplished so far in your life (e.g., as a baby you learned to walk).

A Purposeful Challenge

Practice saying purposefulness three times fast.



Virtues Reflection Questions

- ❶ Name three famous or successful people. How do you think they practiced purposefulness?
- ❷ What are the biggest distractions when you are trying to get something done?
- ❸ What can you do to stay focused?
- ❹ What is something you are purposeful about?
- ❺ How important is a sense of purpose to success?
- ❻ When do you find it easiest to concentrate and stay focused?
- ❼ Make three goals you would like to accomplish in the next three months.



Drawing Purposefulness

Draw symbols or pictures of three goals you want to accomplish in the next three months, or make a collage using magazine pictures and words to stand for your three-month goals.



Poster Points

- ❶ Living on purpose.
- ❷ Keep your eyes on the prize.
- ❸ A designer life.



Quotable Quotes

"If you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there." Lewis B. Carrol

"If you always do what you always did, you'll always get what you always got." Lait Ribeiro

"Everyone should carefully observe which way his heart draws him, and then choose that way with all his strength." Jewish proverb

"The secret of getting ahead is getting started. The secret of getting started is breaking your overwhelming tasks into small, manageable tasks, and then starting on the first one."

Mark Twain

"Always act, always walk, always proceed. Neither stand still nor go back..." St. Augustine

"Strong reasons make strong actions."
Unknown

BROO TURKEY, BROO DUCK, AND BROO FOWL-COCK

Duck and Turkey made a bargain to kill Fowl-Cock. Everytime the farmer's wife would throw feed to them, Fowl-Cock, because he was so greedy, would eat all of it up quickly. If either of the other scratched up a delicacy, Fowl-Cock was there to take it away from him. Finally, the other two could stand it no longer and they made up their minds to kill Fowl-Cock.

This day, when the farmer's wife fed them, Turkey and Duck pretended to quarrel. As they strutted around and screamed and gobbled and quacked, Fowl-Cock watched them. Eventually, he stepped in.

"What are you two quarreling about?" he asked.

But there was no proper answer. Instead, Turkey jumped on Fowl-Cock and began to berate him for his greedy ways.

Fowl-Cock retorted, "You are acting like a woman."

Turkey screamed, "You are so greedy, you will eat anything."

The quarrel went on and on. Finally, Duck came in between them. When Fowl-Cock made a swipe at Duck, he said, "Yes, that is what I want you to do. I've got you now. I am going to kill you because you eat too much and we can't get anything to eat."

The argument became heated, and Duck fell on Fowl-Cock and held his neck and put it under his wing. When Fowl-Cock fell down, Duck had his neck under his wing, doing his best to break it. Fowl-Cock screamed but Duck wouldn't let him go until he broke his neck.

When Turkey saw him lying there on the ground rooting around, he said, "Now, we will get enough to eat." In the meantime, Fowl-Cock paid for his greediness with his life.



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*An initiative of The Virtues Project,
Governor's Children and Families Council
coordinated by the Community Foundation
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and
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