



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION



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

AUGUST 2017 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 Kaveline 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 many 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 discouraging 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.

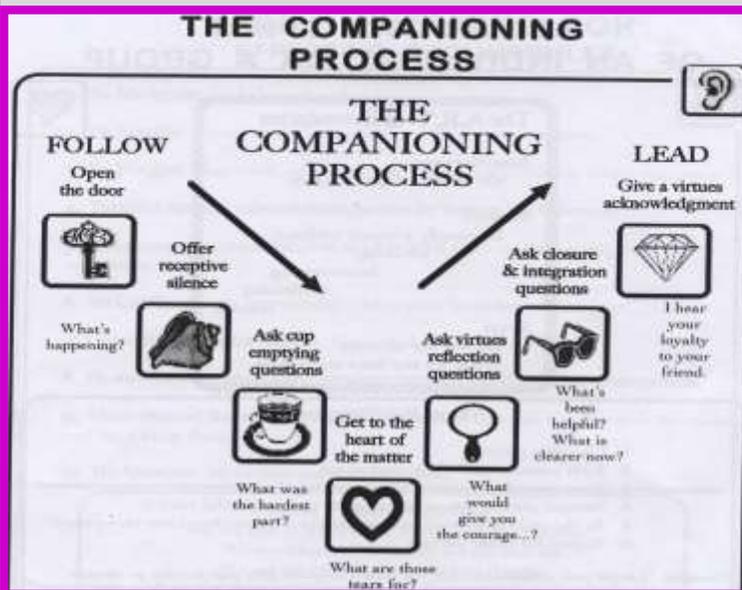
In review ... From September to June, the five strategies have been discussed in detail. During the months of June through August, the strategies will continue to be reviewed.

Strategy #5: What is Offer Companionship?

Offer Companionship is being deeply present and listening with compassionate curiosity that guides others to find clarity and to create their own solutions. It supports healing and growth. How well do you listen to others, to yourself about what really needs to be heard?

Offer Companionship involves using the virtues of compassion and detachment. While compassion is understanding and caring when someone is hurt or troubled, even if you don't know them, detachment is experiencing your feelings without allowing your feelings to control you.

It is wanting to help, even if all you can do is listen and say kind words. You forgive mistakes. You are a friend when someone needs a friend. Instead of just reacting, with detachment you are free to choose how you will act. You use thinking and feeling together, so you can make smart choices.



This is a communication skill that:

- Requires deep listening
- Is most effective when we don't have an "agenda"
- Is meant to support and empower, not fix or rescue
- Primarily consists of silence and open-ended questions
- Requires trust in the other's process





Open the Door ... with open-ended questions:

What's happening?
What is it?
What are those tears?



Offer Receptive Silence:

Give them the space to speak fully, to tell the whole story. Be fully present with deep concentration and compassionate curiosity. Shield yourself with detachment, so you can walk intimately with them without taking on their feelings.



Ask Cup-Emptying Questions:

Follow their lead and ask questions that allow them to empty their cup and get to the heart of the matter.

Use what and how questions, NOT why or which. How was that for you?

Take your cues from their words:

For example, Speaker: I'm really frustrated .

Listener: What frustrates you?

Speaker: I'm just not sure.

Listener: Either remain silent or ask, What are you unsure of?

Focus on Sensory Clues:

Concentrate on and even repeat words they use that involve seeing, hearing, feeling, sensing.

Speaker: It was the most beautiful sunset I ever saw.

Listener: Beautiful ...

Listener: (Speaker's eyes well up with tears) What are the tears for?

Speaker is yelling, This place is so stupid!

Listener: (Match their volume.) What's stupid about this place?

Listener (Speaker is crying): What are those tears?



Ask Virtues Reflection Questions:

When they seem to have gotten to the heart of the matter or the core issue, ask a question that helps to reflect on a virtue that will help them. About something that is frightening,

What would give you the courage to ... ? Or What would give you peace about this?



Ask Closure and Integration Questions:

What was helpful about talking?

What's clearer to you now?

What did you appreciate about this meeting?



Give a Virtues Acknowledgement:

This is an essential step in restoring the speaker even if your companionship was brief and did not include all these steps. I appreciate your openness to explore this.



Who can be contacted for additional information?

Feel free to contact the Division of Virgin Islands Cultural Education at 340-774-0100 x:2804, 2806 or 340-773-1095 x:7032.

AUGUST 2017

VIRTUES OF THE MONTH:

Modesty

I am thankful for the gift of Modesty. It reminds me that I am enough.

(August 6 – August 12, 2017)

Cleanliness

I am thankful for the gift of Cleanliness. It frees my spirit.

(August 13 - August 19, 2017)

Detachment

I am thankful for the gift of Detachment. It lifts me up.

(August 20– August 26, 2017)

Caring

I am thankful for the gift of Caring. It helps me to express my love.

(August 27 - September 2, 2017)

Upcoming

SEPTEMBER 2017

VIRTUES OF THE MONTH:

Love

I am thankful for the gift of Love. It is my treasury.

(September 3 - September 9, 2017)

Kindness

I am thankful for the gift of Kindness. It awakens my heart.

(September 10 - September 16, 2017)

Compassion

I am thankful for the gift of Compassion. It stirs my heart.

(September 17 - September 23, 2017)

Gentleness

I am thankful for the gift of Gentleness. It makes my soul serene.

(September 24– September 30, 2017)

MODESTY

Modesty is having self-respect. When you value yourself with quiet pride, you accept praise with humility and gratitude. Modesty is being comfortable with yourself and setting healthy boundaries about your body and your privacy.

“You have a good many little gifts and virtues, but here is no need to be parading them, for conceit spoils the finest genius. There is not much danger that real talent or goodness will be overlooked long and the great charm of all power is modesty.”

Louisa May Alcott

The Practice of Modesty

... I practice modesty when I ...

Am comfortable being who I am

Respect myself

Do not permit anyone to abuse my body

Set boundaries about my right to privacy

Accept praise with humility and gratitude

Share my victories without boasting

Affirmation:

I am modest. I have no need to brag.

I dress in a way that shows respect for myself and others.

I protect myself from disrespectful attention

CULTURAL PROVERBS

“Braggin’ ah hall, nuttin’ ah chamber”

Meanings:

Do your bragging outside, where you are not so well known.

FOLKTALE

“Pussycat and Rat”

Broo Nansi - - A Selection of Anansi Stories

Collected by Dr. Lezmore E. Emanuel

Discover how Pussycat’s immodest behavior affected his trusted friend Rat!

Activities with Modesty



Dress Code

Talk about how a dress code can help people to dress in a way that shows respect for their bodies and for others. If your school has a dress code, make an illustrated poster of the rules.



Poster Points

- Expect respect.
- Share the victories.
- Thankful, not boastful.
- Share the glory.
- Dress for success.



Virtues Reflection Questions

- How would it feel to be on a team and have someone else take all the credit for a win?
- How can you show modesty if you have made a great play in a game?
- How could you enjoy your victory and still be modest?
- Name three ways to protect yourself from unwanted touching by others?
- What would you do if someone in your family touched you inappropriately?
- What is your favorite outfit, one that feels like it's really "you"?



Quotable Quotes

"We come nearest to the great when we are great in humility." Rabindrath Tagore

"We do not possess our homes, our children, or even our own body. They are given to us for a short while to treat with care and respect."

Jack Kornfield

"I discovered I always have choices and sometimes it's only a choice of attitude."

Judith M. Knowlton

"I cannot and will not cut my conscience to fit this year's fashions." Lillian Hellman

"Never esteem anything as of advantage to you that will make you break your word or lose your self-respect."

Marcus Aurelius Antoninus



Drawing Modesty

Draw people on a team sharing the glory with each other.

PUSSYCAT AND RAT

One time Pussycat invited Rat to a ball to show her Trouble. Rat said, "I don't know what is called Trouble."

So Pussycat told her, "Come, I will show you what Trouble is."

Now Pussycat had built a house and blocked it so nobody could come out. Then she went around closing up all the doors and windows except the way through which Rat would come. Pussycat had told Rat to bring her whole family and presently the whole Rat family trooped in.

Pussycat cried, "Welcome, Friend Rat. I know you are anxious to find out what Trouble is, so we shall start right away. First, we'll dance the korowes."

They danced until they were tired. Then Pussycat cried out, "That's enough. It's time to show you all what Trouble is. Gather around." All the Rats did so with the large rats to the front and the little rats on the side. Without warning, Pussycat leaped on Grandfather Rat and broke his neck, then on Grandmother Rat. By this time all the rats were in confusion running here and there with no place to get out.

As Pussycat killed them she cried out, "You all wanted to know what Trouble was. Well, here is some Trouble and some more and some more!" And she killed every rat she could find. All that is, except one small one that had managed to wiggle itself into a hole that Pussycat had overlooked.

And from that day to this, Rats live in holes in the wall and should they happen to see a cat nearby, they make a dash for it as it is the only place where they may be safe.

CLEANLINESS

Cleanliness means washing often, keeping your body clean, and wearing clean clothes. It is putting into your body and your mind only the things that keep you healthy. It is staying free from harmful drugs. It is cleaning up mistakes and making a fresh start.

“In every aspect of life, purity and holiness, cleanliness and refinement, exalt the human condition ... Even in the physical realm, cleanliness will conduce to spirituality.”

Abd'ul Baha, Selected Writings P. 146 - 7

The Practice of Cleanliness

... I practice cleanliness when I ...

Keep my body fresh and clean
Put things away after I use them
Help keep my house neat and clean
Put only healthful things in my body
Use clean language
Clean up my mistakes

Affirmation:

I keep my mind and body healthy and clean. I put my things and my life in order.
I am willing to clean up my mistakes.

CULTURAL PROVERBS

“Cleanliness is next to Godliness”

Meanings:

Being a clean person is just as important as being Godly.

FOLKTALE

“Tukuma and the Mosquitos”

Broo Nansi - - A Selection of Anansi Stories

Collected by Dr. Lezmore E. Emanuel

Discover the cleverness of Tukuma
to clean the mosquito infested land as it was ordered by the king!

Activities with Cleanliness



Activities with Cleanliness

- "Clean Up Your Act"
 - Name a mistake you have made that you regret. How did you feel afterwards? How did it affect others?
 - Describe how you could have cleaned up the mistake? What could you have said or done to make amends?
- Choose a school or neighborhood area and clean it up.
- Study pollution in your local community or elsewhere in the world. Define ways this can be changed or cleaned up.
- Talk about physical health and hygiene.



Virtues Reflection Questions

- What does it feel like to be in a messy room?
- How does it affect your mind? Your sense of well-being?
- How does it feel to be in a clean, orderly room? What effect does this have on your ability to think clearly?
- Brainstorm what to do and say when another student or an adult is selling drugs.



Drawing Cleanliness

- Draw a picture of a child or animal that has become dirty. Draw a second picture showing the figure clean and neat again.
- Draw three ways you keep your body clean.



Poster Points

- Clean body. Clean thoughts. Clean slate.
- I clean up my mistakes.
- Drug Free Zone.
- Garbage in, garbage out.
- The earth is our home. Let's keep it clean!



Quotable Quotes

"Our eyes may see some uncleanness, but let not our mind see things that are not clean. Our ears may hear some uncleanness, but let not our mind hear things that are not clean."
Shinto saying

"Clean and sober." 12-Step Program

"Bid them wash their faces and keep their teeth clean." Shakespeare (Antony & Cleopatra)

"Let me remember that there is nothing more soothing than the sound of running water, even if it is only in my bathtub."
Anne Wilson Schaefer

"Live pure, speak true, right wrong..."
Tennyson

TUKUMA AND THE MOSQUITOES

One time there was a king who had a piece of land to be cleared. Plenty of people came to try to clear the land, but there was one condition they could not meet. The land was infested with mosquitoes. They would bite the cutters, and the king had told them that they could not scratch when bitten or they would forfeit the payment.

When Tukuma heard this, he decided to try his luck. He went and told the king, "Sir, I will clear this land for you."

The king asked, "How will you clear it? It is full of mosquitoes and if they bite you, you are not permitted to scratch."

Tukuma replied, "Nevertheless, I will do it."

The king agreed and promised to pay Tukuma twelve patacong. Tukuma said to himself that he could buy a cow with twelve patacong and still have ten left over.

The king told him that he would send a bumba to watch and see that he did not scratch. While Tukuma was cutting and clearing the ground, the mosquitoes came at him in swarms and bit him. Instead of scratching, he would stamp his foot, or fling his arm or shake his head.

When he had finished, the king sent for him and consulted the bumba who confirmed that Tukuma had not scratched once and had done a good job of clearing the land. The king was so pleased that he gave him the twelve patacong, a cow, and plenty of cassava. Tukuma called Nansi to help him butcher the cow. Nansi brought three men to help and each man demanded a quarter of the cow. Then Nansi took half of the remaining quarter and half of the cow's head. Then Nansi helped Tukuma to eat the rest of the meat until it was all finished. Tukuma now only had the broth, and Nansi took half of that, too.

The next time Nansi came to visit Tukuma, he saw that Tukuma had some cassava and wanted to take away some of that, too. In order to save something from his labor, Tukuma dragged some of the cassava under the house. Nansi left him almost desolate — all because Tukuma needed a little help.

DETACHMENT

Detachment is experiencing your feelings without allowing your feelings to control you. Instead of just reacting, with detachment you are free to choose how you will act. You use thinking and feeling together, so you can make smart choices.

“You always have the choice to take all things evenly, to hold on to nothing, to receive each irritation as if you had only fifteen minutes to live.”

Tolbert McCarroll

The Practice of Detachment

... I practice detachment when I ...

Don't get swept away by strong feelings
Take time out before doing something I will regret
Step back and look at my feelings
Act instead of react
Let go of things I cannot control
Choose to do what is right

Affirmation:

I am detached. I am aware of my feelings and choose my actions with detachment.
I do what is right for me. I choose to be my best self no matter what happens.

CULTURAL PROVERBS

“Don' measure me coal wid somebody else pan”

Meanings:

Don't judge me by others' standards.

FOLKTALE

“Why Nanny Goat's Children Have 'Earring”
Puppyshung's Last Wedding and other Anansi Stories
Collected by Lezmore Emanuel

You will learn if the father exercised detachment,
while dealing with a woman from his village who lost his children!

Activities with Detachment



Activities with Detachment

- Make a list of the things that annoy you. Set a goal to detach from each of these and think about what will help you to detach. Don't name names. This list is just for you.
- Name three life situations that need detachment in order to live happily. (e.g., Someone who has a chronic illness, or is in a wheel chair).



Virtues Reflection Questions

- What are some of the hardest times for people to be detached?
- Name a time you needed lots of detachment.
- What are the best things about detachment?
- What happens if we don't practice detachment?
- What would you change in your life and your behavior if you only had one week to live?



Drawing Detachment

Draw a scene of yourself showing detachment.



Poster Points

- Look. Choose. Act.
- Smart choices.
- I don't react. I act.
- Detach and go within.
- Stop and think.
- Use thinking and feeling together.



Quotable Quotes

"Never undertake reflection and action independently." Pablo Friere

"Let go and let God" Alcoholics Anonymous

*"He who binds to himself a joy doth the winged life destroy,
but he who kisses the joy as it flies
lives in eternity's sunrise."* William Blake

"You always have the choice to take all things evenly, to hold onto nothing, to receive each irritation as if you had only fifteen minutes to live." Tolbert McCarroll

"When there is something wrong with everyone, there is something wrong with you."
Anonymous

"Life is like an orchestra – if a man wants to lead, he has to turn his back to the crowd."
Lawrence Welk

*"Do not look back in anger, or forward in fear,
but around in awareness."* James Thurber



WHY NANNY GOAT'S CHILDREN HAVE "EARRINGS"

Once, a long, long, time ago in a far village lived a man with his son and little daughter. Times were hard and he had to go a long way to work. Not wanting to take his children on this difficult journey, he left them in the care of a woman who lived just outside the village.

Now, this woman had magical powers and anytime somebody annoyed her she would sing a song which would change the person into whatever she desired. The song was:

*Diga laga
Ah smell Dutch
Diga laga oh!
Diga laga
Ah smell Dutch
Simi dimi
Ah quell Quashiebo!*

It so happened that the little girl had heard the old woman singing the song and had seen her changing an old man into a tree stump. She didn't say anything to her brother. One day, when the woman had gone into the village for groceries she and her brother fell into an argument. Finally, the little girl told her brother:

"I don't care what you say, I'm right and if you don't leave me alone I'll turn you into a jumbi umbrella!"

Her brother laughed and jeered. "Turn me into a jumbi umbrella? You must think you are a witch! You can't do anything of the sort!"



“Oh no?” answered his sister and immediately began to sing the song. No sooner had she sung the song than her brother changed into a jumbi umbrella!” The little girl said delightedly, “See? I told you I could do it! Now change back.” To her horror, nothing happened. She tried everything she could think of, but to no avail. Terrified, not knowing what to do, she ran into the back yard and hid in the goat pen.

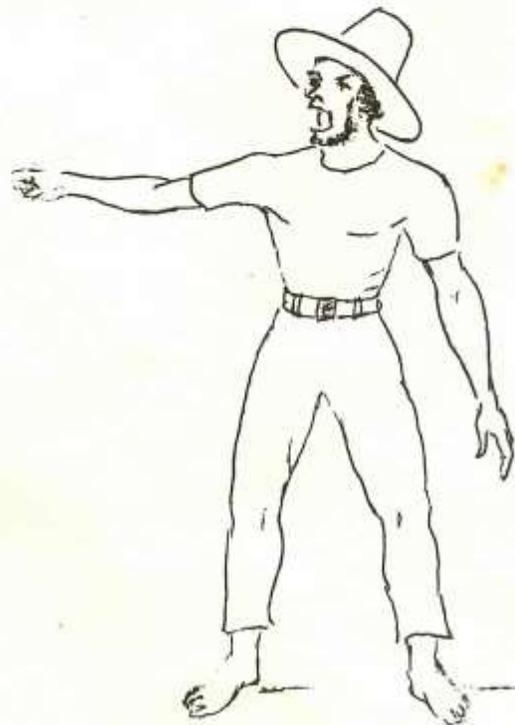
When the woman arrived home, she could find neither child. She called and called and finally heard a faint voice answering from the goat pen. She questioned the girl and the whole story came pouring out. The woman was furious.

“Wicked, stupid girl!” she shouted. “For turning your brother into a jumbi umbrella, I am going to turn you into a goat! See how *you* like that!” In spite of the girl’s pleas, the old woman sang the song and turned her into a Nanny goat. When the old lady’s anger cooled off, she thought about turning the girl back into her former self, but discovered that she couldn’t do it! She did not know it, but the little girl had been wearing a pair of golden earrings which had turned into two tiny pendulums, one swinging from each ear. She was the only goat in the pen with these “earrings.”

Soon, the children’s father arrived to take them home, only to be met by the old woman with a preposterous story about his son having been turned into a jumbi umbrella and his daughter into a nanny goat!

“Old woman, are you crazy?” He demanded. “I want my children and I want them now!” Since the father wouldn’t be convinced, she sang the song and turned a nearby pig into a turnip. Believing her at last, the father seized the woman and said,

“Because of you I have lost both of my children. Now, I am going to sing your song and turn you into a black bird and you will fly the world over and search and search until you find my daughter.” He sang the song and the woman turned into a blackbird. Now she flies and circles all over the world looking for the little girl in order to change her back. So far, she has not succeeded. However, there is one circumstance to prove that this story may be true. If you look carefully at any flock of goats there are generally one or two who sport “earrings”. These are the children of the little girl.



CARING

Caring is giving love and attention to people and things that matter to you. When you care about people, you help them. You do a careful job, giving your very best effort. You treat people and things gently and respectfully.
Caring makes the world a safer people.

“One who cares, listens.”

Paul Tillick

The Practice of Caring

... I practice Caring when I ...

Show care for others, myself, and the earth
Look at people and listen closely
Handle things carefully
Am gentle with people and things placed in our care
Treat my body with respect
Work with enthusiasm and excellence

Affirmation

I care for others and myself. I pay loving attention. I give my best to every job.

CULTURAL PROVERBS

Bathe people chil’run bu’ don’ wash behin’ de ears
It’s all right to bathe your neighbors children but don’t scrub behind their ears.

Meaning

Caring is necessary, however be sure to stay within of your boundary.

ANANSI STORY

Broo Nansi, Broo Tukuma, and the Butter
Broo Nansi - - A Selection of Anansi Stories
Collected by Dr. Lezmore E. Emanuel

In Broo Nansi, Broo Tukuma, and the Butter,
you will see how Nansi rewarded Tukuma for being a caring friend.

Activities with *Caring*



Activities with Care

- Brainstorm everything a class or family pet needs.
- Do a project focused on caring for the earth, such as cleaning up a neighborhood street.
- Offer help to an elderly person.
- Think of someone in your class or your family and do caring things for them for a week. Then share what changes you noticed.



Virtues Reflection Questions

- How can you tell when others care about you?
- How do you feel when others act uncaring?
- Name three caring things you have done this week.
- Name a character from a book or story and describe what they care about most?
- Look at a newspaper or magazine and find stories about people who need care. Think of a way you and others can be of help.
- Name three ways you can care for the earth. (e.g. recycle, reuse, reduce)



Drawing Caring

Draw a picture of the people you care about. Draw a picture of people caring for the earth. Make a "Caring" Collage.



Poster Points

- Show that you care.
- Caring is a special way of loving.
- Yes, I care.
- Giving my best.
- Earth is our home. Let's take care of our home.



Quotable Quotes

"People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." Unknown

"Charity begins at home." Terence

"Caring matters most." Hugel

"How shall we expect charity toward others, when we are uncharitable to ourselves?"
Thomas Browne

"The care of human life and happiness, and not their destruction, is the first and only legitimate object of good government."
Thomas Jefferson

"Every part of this earth is sacred to my people. Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every clearing and humming insect is holy in the memory and experience of my people."
Chief Seattle's letter to President of U.S.A, 1885

BROO NANSI, BROO TUKUMA, AND THE BUTTER

Broo Tukuma and Broo Nansi were friends for a very long time. One day as they were strolling through the woods they found a keg of salt butter. Now this was a great delicacy, as it was used to season food as well as butter bread. They hid the butter in the bushes and decided that they would come back soon and divide it equally between them. They promised to say nothing to anyone in the village.

Several weeks passed, and finally Nansi said to Broo Tukuma: "Broo, some friends in the next village have invited me to a christening. I will be gone for a few days." Nansi packed and pretended to be going on a journey. As soon as he was out of sight of the village, he hurried to the place where he and Tukuma had hidden the butter. He took the top off and ate a quarter of the butter. Then he returned to the village.

When he arrived, Tukuma said to him, "What is the name of the child?"

"Top off," replied Broo Nansi.

Several days later he told Broo Tukuma, "I am invited to another christening. I will be back soon." Broo Nansi repeated the same maneuver. This time he ate to the halfway mark of the butter.

When he returned to the village, Tukuma asked him, "What is the name of the baby this time?"

"Half gone," replied Nansi.

Some days later he said to Tukuma, "I don't know what is going on, but I have a third christening to go to."

"Well, you are a very popular fellow. Enjoy yourself," Tukuma returned.

Nansi went and ate all of the butter. When he returned, Tukuma asked him, "How is the child called this time?"

"Licked clean," replied Nansi.

A couple of weeks later Tukuma suggested that they go and divide the butter. Nansi agreed. He had his wife cook up some pea soup with cattle tongue dumplings. They walked all morning without a rest. When they got to the place where the butter was hidden, Nansi said that they should eat first because they had been traveling all morning. They ate, and the heavy meal plus the weariness from walking soon had Tukuma snoring.

As he slept, Nansi went to the barrel and scraped the remnants of the butter and smeared them on Tukuma's mouth and hands. Then he climbed a tree and started one big outcry. He shouted so long and so hard that pretty soon the entire village had turned out to see what the problem was.

"Look!" Broo Nansi shouted, "Tukuma is so greedy that he ate the whole keg of butter that we found, by himself. If you don't believe me, check his mouth and hands."

The villagers did so and cried shame on Tukuma. Poor Tukuma was startled from sleep, and unaware of what was going on, found himself being berated and beaten on all sides. When he collected his senses, he took off for parts unknown, vowing vengeance on Broo Nansi. Broo Nansi had a hearty laugh but he remembered what Broo Tukuma said about repaying him. So he stayed up in the tree, and he is there to this day.

References



* **Virtues**

Activi-

ties:

**The Virtues Project Educator's Guide
Simple Ways to Create a Culture of Character**

Linda Kavelin Popov
Author of The Family Virtues Guide

* **Virtues Definitions, Practices and Affirmations:**

**Virtues Cards
Reminders of the Gifts of Character
The Virtues Project**

* **Virtues Strategies Explanation:**

**The Virtues Project Educator's Guide
Simple Ways to Create a Culture of Character**

Linda Kavelin Popov
Author of The Family Virtues Guide

* **Local Proverbs:**

Herbs & Proverbs of the Virgin Islands

By Arona Petersen



Bringing Virtues to Life

*An initiative of The Virtues Project,
Governor's Children and Families Council
coordinated by the Community Foundation
of the Virgin Islands,
and
Virgin Islands Department of Education
Division of Virgin Islands Cultural Education*

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Education, History and Culture!*

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