

Making Character Development a Priority in Schools

Me Work. We Work. The Work.

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Today,
I hope
to share

Steps to building an effective
character education
initiative.

Strategies for self
examination, understanding
others and building a
healthy adult culture.

The PRIMED Model.

Suggestions for next steps

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Framing Questions

Question #1

How is a person's character developed?

Question #2

What do you hope to accomplish/change with character education?

Question #3

How will you assess your effectiveness?



Character Development

“When we think about the kind of character we want for our children, it’s clear that we want them to be able to...

judge what is right,

care deeply about what is right,

do what they believe to be right

—even in the face of pressure from without and temptation from within.”

-Dr. Thomas Lickona

How is a person's character developed?

"No one enters their story fully formed.

We have all been shaped into the characters that we are today.

And nothing shapes our character quite like the characters we are surrounded by."

~Lo Alaman, Wake up Call

Teacher Impact



Educators have the access, ability, and responsibility of having a profound impact on children and their character.

The amount of time educators spend with students may very well exceed the face-to-face time they spend with any other adult on a daily basis.



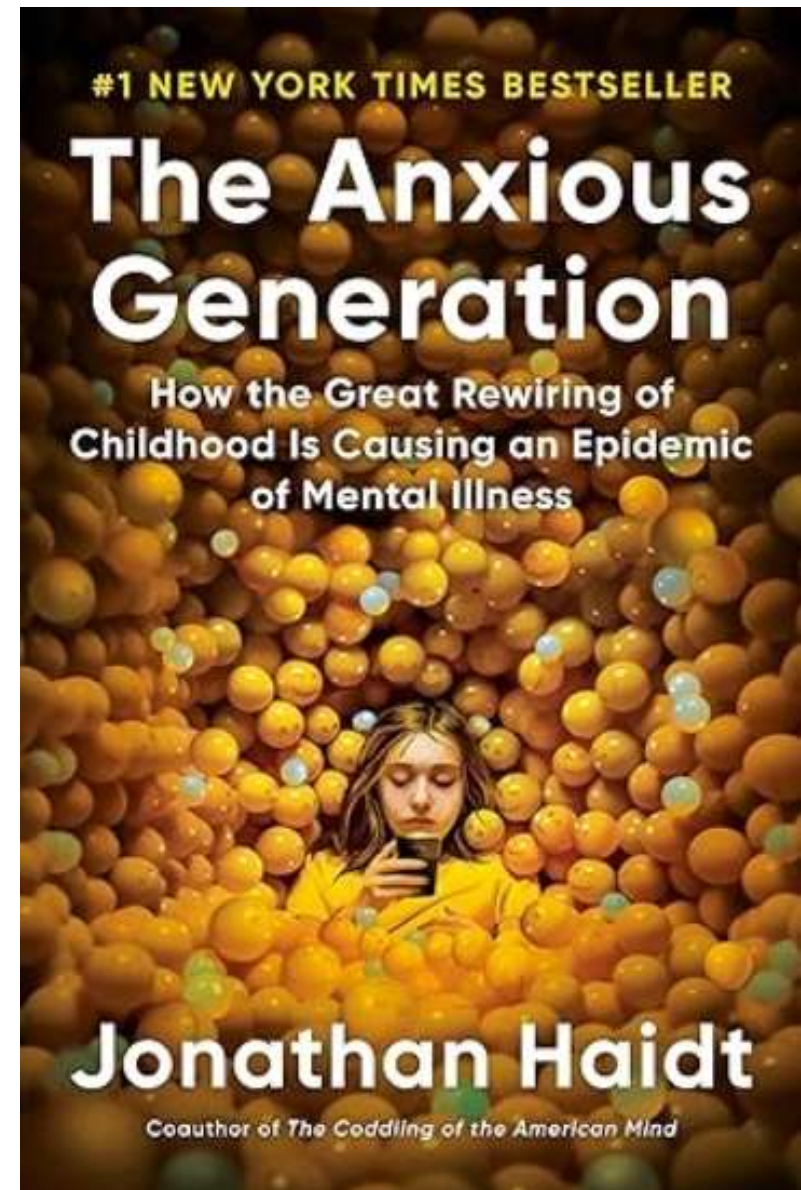
We are
competing for
the hearts and
minds of our
children, and we
are not the only
ones.

The Great Rewiring of Childhood

Between 2010 and 2015, the social lives of American teens moved largely onto smartphones with continuous access to social media, online video games, and other internet-based activities.

The Great Rewiring of Childhood is ***the single largest reason for the tidal wave of adolescent mental illness*** that began in the early 2010s.

This is what is competing for the hearts and minds of our children.



Character Education

is not an easy, 5-step program.

It is a philosophy, an intentional way
of being and treating others.

It is a strategic, measurable plan to
develop a *moral compass* in students.

It is time consuming. It is hard.

It is worth it.



“We are trying to help youth to be the best people they can be, both for their own sake and for the people and world around them.

We cannot afford to educate a generation with great grit and other performance characteristics but with no **moral GPS** to direct those performance skills toward an ethical purpose.”

~Dr. Marvin W Berkowitz



Character ed. that works
is like smok'en a brisket!



Character ed. that fails is like
fix'en a brisket in a microwave.

3 Phases of Character Education



ME WORK



WE WORK



THE WORK

Character Education begins with YOU.

“The only thing that exceeds right doing is right being.”

~O. Chambers



Examine your “Being”

“Almost all of us wear masks, not only when facing others but even when looking in the mirror.”

~Thomas Green

“No man knows how bad he is until he tries very hard to be good..”

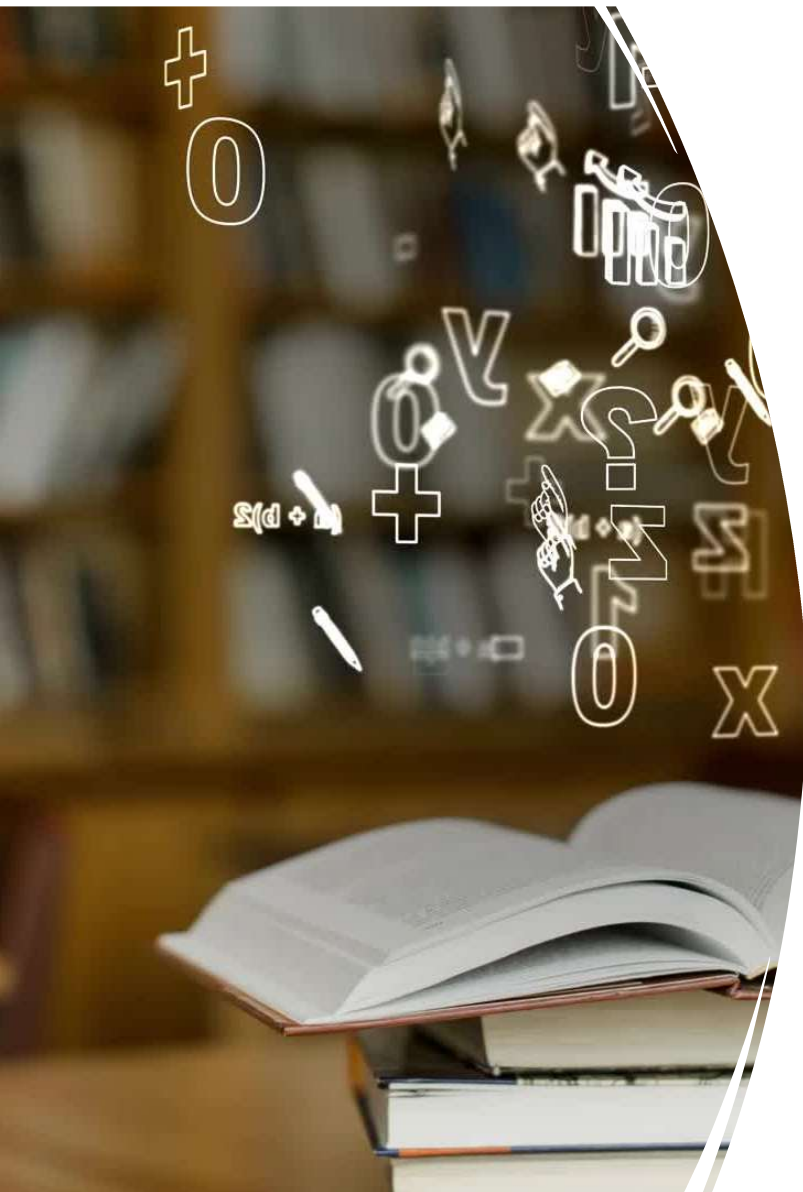
~C. S. Lewis

“

Who are you at your core?

1. When you were a child, what positive character trait (virtue) did your parents most want to instill in you?
2. Besides your parents, who else influenced your character? Name a virtue they possessed.
3. What virtue do you want to see in your co-workers?
4. What virtue do you hope to instill in your students?
5. At your funeral, what virtue do you hope is used to describe you in your eulogy?





‘Me Work’ Homework

Create a Personal Board of Directors

Define your core values

Create Personal Mission Statement – Define your why

Examine your moral compass

How do you determine right vs. wrong?

Journal, Reflect

How do you strive to live the virtues that define you?

Find an accountability partner



The 'We Work'

When you are vulnerable enough
for “me” work,
you are ready for “we” work
which is all about RELATIONSHIPS
beginning with the adults in your
building!

Consider...

how much time you spend getting to know people in your school?

how comfortable are you being uncomfortable with new ideas?

how does your staff deal with conflicting personalities and/or philosophies?

THE FOUNDATION

Adult Relationships





So why don't we?

No Time
No Interest
No Need
No Courage

5-minute Personality Survey

A little fun before the work!

<https://www.dec.state.ga.us/documents/attachments/5minutepersonalitytest.pdf>

Written by Gary Smalley and John Trent

1.	Likes Authority 3	Enthusiastic 4	Sensitive Feelings 1	Likes Instructions 2
2.	Takes Charge	Takes Risks	Loyal	Accurate
3.	Determined	Visionary	Calm, Even Keel	Consistent
4.	Enterprising	Very Verbal	Enjoys Routine	Predictable
5.	Competitive	Promoter	Dislikes Change	Practical
6.	Problem Solver	Enjoys Popularity	Gives In To Others	Factual
7.	Productive	Fun-Loving	Avoids Confrontations	Conscientious
8.	Bold	Likes Variety	Sympathetic	Perfectionist
9.	Decision Maker	Spontaneous	Nurturing	Detail-Oriented
10.	Persistent	Inspirational	Peacemaker	Analytical

Task Oriented LION

“Let’s Do It NOW!”

Likes to have authority

Productive

Determined

Confident

Strong willed

Goal driven

Competitive

Demanding

Dismisses others

Overbearing

Cocky

Controlling

Workaholic

Cut-throat



Lions: Be softer and gentler and include others when making decisions.

Task Oriented Beaver

“How was it done in the past?”

Enjoys instructions

Accurate

Consistent

Practical

Detailed

Sensitive

Analytical

Afraid to break rules

Too critical

Lack spontaneity

Not adventurous

Struggle to finish projects

Stubborn

Loses overview



Beavers: Learn to relax and don't expect others to do things just like you.

People Oriented Otter

“ Trust me, it will work out.”

Enthusiastic

Energetic

Promoter

Optimistic

Spontaneous

Motivator

Enjoys Change

Overbearing

Impatient

Exaggerator

Don't see details

Not focused

Manipulator

Lacks follow through



Otters: Think before you speak and consider consequences before you act.

People Oriented Golden Retriever

“Let’s keep things the way they are.”



Non-demanding

Enjoys routine

Adaptable

Avoids conflict

Calm, even keel

Loyal

Accommodating

Pushover

Stays in rut

Loses identity

Misses honest intimacy

Lacks enthusiasm

Misses opportunities

Indecisive

Retrievers: Practice saying no and making firm decisions



One year of *intentional* relationship building, a.k.a. 'We Work'

- Personality surveys
- Staff family gatherings. Social gatherings.
- Plan time meetings
- Book studies
- BOYB (Brag on Your Buddy)
- Social Six
- Consistent "If you Really Knew Me" activities
- Core value work

Create a committee to ensure this happens.

Core Values (Principle 1)

Core values are fundamental guiding principles or beliefs that shape actions, decisions and behaviors.

When stakeholders agree on core values to live by, they answer,

**“How are we going to behave, “to be”
especially toward one another in this space?”**

THIS TAKES TIME!

2 Categories of Character

Moral Character



Focus on ethical behavior and ensures pursuits are conducted ethically.

Doing the right thing for others.

- Humility, Honesty, Integrity

Performance Character

Drives excellence and success in tasks, academics, or professional pursuits.

Qualities that lead to achievement and overcoming obstacles.

- Diligence, Self-discipline, Resilience



2 more types of Character

Intellectual Character – Virtues that guide how people think, learn, and pursue truth and understanding.

Open-minded, Curiosity, Intellectual Persistence

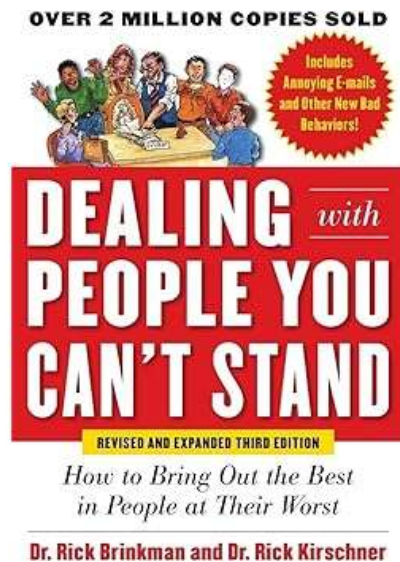
Civic Character – Enables people to contribute to the common good of their communities. Balances self-interests with the welfare of others.

Service-oriented, Altruistic, Respect



Moral Compass Engineers

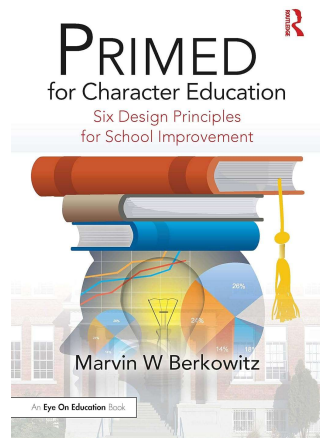
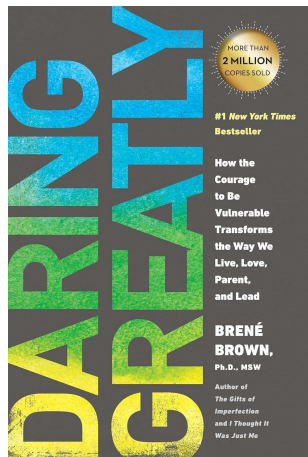
If you could design a moral compass for your school and there could only be 4 “directions” (virtues) that would help successfully guide students through life, what would they be?



‘We Work’ Homework

As a staff, read

Dealing with People You Can't Stand, PRIMED,
Daring Greatly



- If You Really Knew Me activities at faculty meetings.
- Develop a Board of Directors, personally/staff
- Develop The Portrait of the XX School Staff.
- Develop a School Compass/ Core Values (4 Virtues)
- Self-assess the 11 Principles from Characterplus, formerly character.org

Together, answer these to begin THE Work

What do you hope to accomplish/change with character education?

- Knowing yourself and the people in your building will lead to robust conversations.

How will you assess your effectiveness?

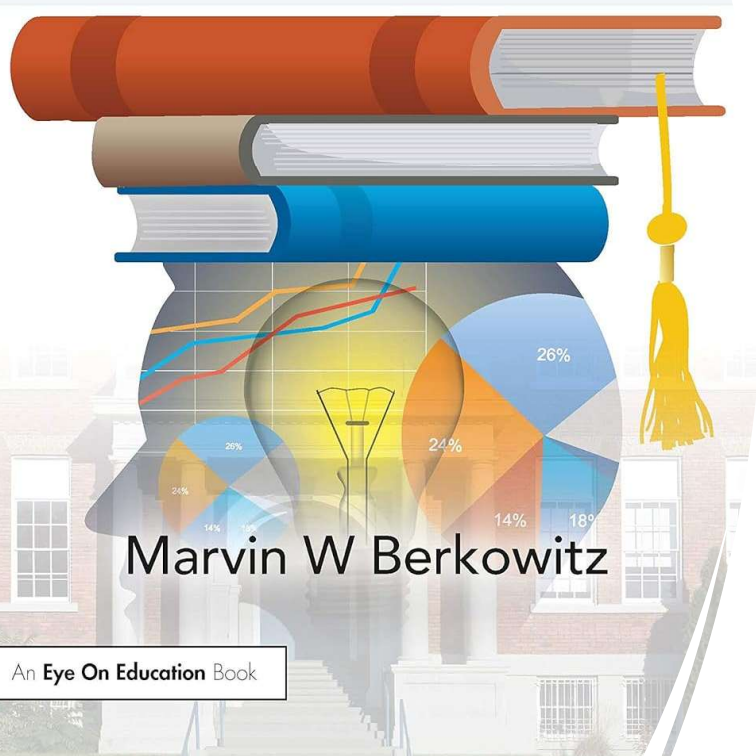
- This is BIG and very often ignored which leads to ineffective character education and frustration.



PRIMED

for Character Education

Six Design Principles
for School Improvement



The How

Prioritization

Relationships

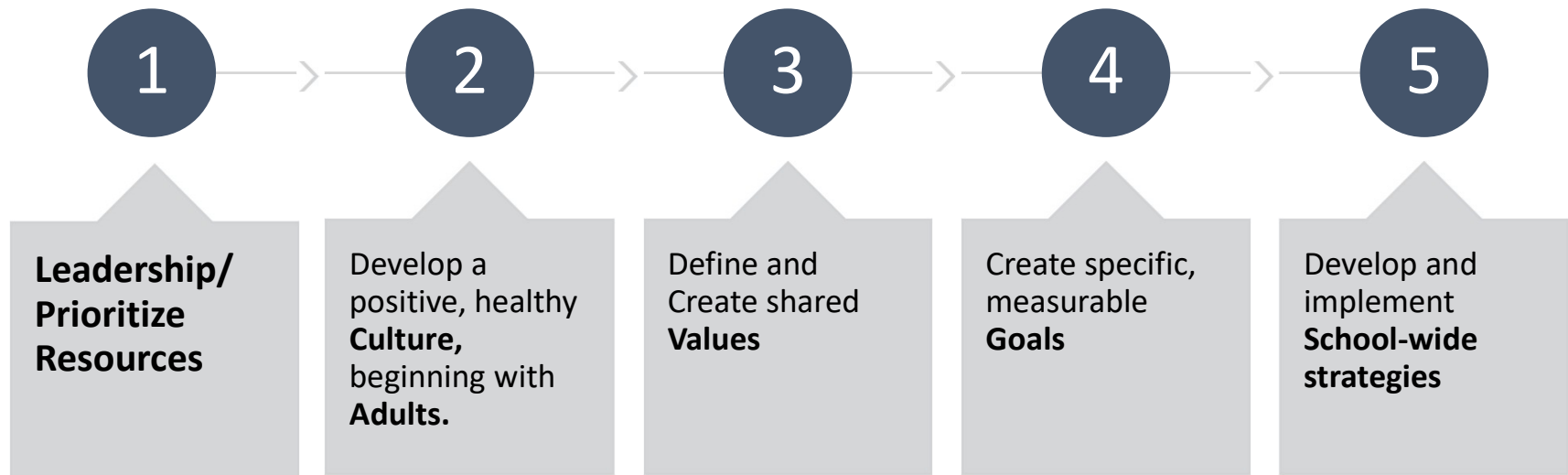
Intrinsic Motivation

Modeling

Empowerment

Developmental Pedagogy

Character Development is a **P**riority



R

Relationships

The 3 R's of character education:

R

Relationships among adults

R

Relationships between students and adults

R

Relationships among students

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I Intrinsic Motivation

Students do not learn to be self-motivated with
Prizes, Tickets, Candy, Trinkets....BRIBES.
They learn this with their “ABCs.”

Autonomy Belonging Competence

~Deci and Ryan, Self-motivation Theory





Modeling

“People need to be reminded more often than instructed.

The real job of every moral teacher is to keep on bringing us back, time after time, to the old simple principles (*or core values*) which we are all so anxious not to see.”

~CS Lewis

Empowerment

Enables individuals to gain
control over their own lives
and achieve greater
autonomy.

Developmental Pedagogy

Consider what you want your students to “look like” “BE” like when they leave your school and even further on in their lives.

What can you do that will have a long-term impact vs. immediate behavior change?

In a Nutshell

Know yourself.

Know others.

Know Character Education.

Make it a **Priority**

Focus on **Relationships**

Foster **Intrinsic Motivation**

Model good character

Authentically **Empower**

Develop character for life



https://youtu.be/pb7_YJp9bVA?si=F10bbM2rrX47JZEJ

