



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

# MARCH 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 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 are the virtues taught? The virtues are taught through the Five Strategies, 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. The five strategies are:

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

What is Set Clear Boundaries? Setting clear boundaries is based on restorative justice (an approach to [justice](#) that focuses on the needs of the victims and the offenders, as well as the involved community, instead of satisfying abstract legal principles or punishing the offender). There is a pending conflict in the classroom, workplace, and/or at home, all involved must be willing to partake in the restoration process (The Process of Restorative Justice). The victim(s) and the offender(s) are given an opportunity to say what happened (Four steps to Restorative Justice). The process of Use Peace Talks in Your Home and Workplace to Resolving Conflict (Peace Talk Steps) follows. The final steps, (Ten Guidelines for Effective Ground Rules), is put in place to avoid reoccurrence. This process will govern how each will proceed in a positive restorative relationship in the future.

### The Process of Restorative Justice

All involved must be willing to partake in the restoration process

In the ideal process of restorative justice, individuals:

- Take *responsibility* for what they do in order to ...
- Make *restitution*, which results in ...
- *Reconciliation*, which is to make friends again, which ...
- *Restores* the relationship and restores the offender to the community.

In this strategy, true forgiveness is first and foremost. In addition, justice requires there be some amends, an action or gesture to fix the problem, with the offender taking responsibility instead of merely being punished. In the ideal situation there is also reconciliation, restoring of friendship, and contentment on all sides with the outcomes. There are four steps to restorative justice.

#### Four Steps to Restorative Justice

The victim(s) and the offender(s) are given an opportunity to say what happened without interruption.

1. Ask all involved what happened. Use how and what questions, NOT why.
2. Ask what virtues were missing to create the conflict.
3. Ask what it would look like if they had use the missing virtue.
4. Ask how they can make amends.

#### Use Peace Talks in Your Home and Workplace to Resolving Conflict ... Peace Talk Steps

- Take turns *Truthfully* telling your experience of what happened.
  - Listen *Respectfully* to the other person's point of view.
  - Share how you *Honestly* felt.
  - *Creatively* find a virtue you each need.
  - Use *Justice* and *Forgiveness* to decide how to do it differently next time.
- Congratulations! You have solved a problem *Peacefully*!

#### Ten Guidelines for Effective Ground Rules

The final steps, (Ten Guidelines for Effective Ground Rules), is put in place to avoid reoccurrence. This process will govern how each will proceed in a positive restorative relationship in the future.

1. *Be moderate*: Only have 4 or 5 rules
2. *Be specific*: Focus on the behaviors specific to your situation.
3. *Be positive*: Base rules on virtues and word them positively when you can.
4. *Establish specific, relevant consequences for bottom line behaviors*.
5. *Make consequences Educative, NOT Punitive*: Give an opportunity to make reparation.
6. *Be Consistent*: Be trustworthy—keep your boundaries.
7. *Communicate Rules Clearly*: Use visuals. Humor helps.
8. *Be sure everyone understands the virtues involved when receiving consequences*.
9. *Make Ground Rules Non-Negotiable*: Be sure that you can live with the rules and then keep them.
10. *Be Assertive*: Make your expectations clear.

Who can be contacted for additional information? Feel free to contact Virtues Project Facilitator, Mrs. Arlene L. Pinney-Benjamin at [alpbenjamin@doe.vi](mailto:alpbenjamin@doe.vi) or 340-774-0100 x: 2804 at the Virgin Islands Department of Education Division of Virgin Islands Cultural Education.

# MARCH 2017

## VIRTUES OF THE MONTH:

### • Courtesy

*I am thankful for the gift of Courtesy. It helps me to brighten people's lives.*

*(February 26 - March 4, 2017)*

### • Friendliness

*I am thankful for the gift of Friendliness. It makes me a true companion.*

*(March 5 - March 11, 2017)*

### • Consideration

*I am thankful for the gift of Consideration. It helps me to be thoughtful of others.*

*(March 12 - March 18, 2017)*

### • Tact

*I am thankful for the gift of Tact. It helps me to be considerate.*

*(March 19 - March 25, 2017)*

### • Honesty

*I am thankful for the gift of Honesty. It allows me to fully be myself.*

*(March 26 - April 1, 2017)*

*Upcoming*  
**APRIL 2017**

**VIRTUES OF THE MONTH:**

**. Trust**

*I am thankful for the gift of Trust. It renews my strength.*

(April 2 - April 8, 2017)

**. Trustworthiness**

*I am thankful for the gift of Trustworthiness. It is the foundation of my success.*

(April 9 - April 15, 2017)

**. Truthfulness**

*I am thankful for the gift of Truthfulness. It is my holy ground.*

(April 16 - April 22, 2017)

**. Integrity**

*I am thankful for the gift of Integrity. It supports me to walk my talk.*

(April 23 - April 29, 2017)

# COURTESY

**Courtesy** is being polite and having good manners. When you speak and act courteously, you give others a feeling of being valued and respected. Greet people pleasantly. Bring courtesy home. Your family needs it most of all. Courtesy helps life to go smoothly.

“See ye not, Courtesy is the true Alchemy,  
turning to gold all it touches and tries?”

*George Meredith “The Song of Courtesy”*

## The Practice of Courtesy

*... I practice courtesy when I ...*

Remember my manners.  
Treat elders, parents, teachers, and children politely.  
Think about how my actions affect others.  
Eat, speak, and move graciously.  
Make requests instead of demands.  
Greet people with a smile.

## Affirmation:

I am courteous. I speak and act in a mannerly way.  
I show others that I value and respect them.

## CULTURAL PROVERBS

Sof’ tong, sof’ bed, sof’ grave, sof’ judgment.  
Howdee an’ t’ankee noh bruk noh bones  
Howdee nebba kill nobody

## Meanings:

It pays to have good manners

## ISLAND STORY

“Broo Nansi and Sister Candlefly”  
Broo ‘Nansi A Selection of Anansi Stories  
collected and transcribed by Lezmore E. Emanuel, Ph.D.

Broo Nansi was his lazy greedy self again.  
Discover how he misused the kind courtesy extended to him by Sister Candlefly!



# Activities with *Courtesy*



## Phone Courtesy

1) Have a phone-answering role play. Show discourteous ways to answer the phone first, then courteous ways (a) at home (b) at a friend's house (c) at an office.

Have students practice with a partner until they come up with expressions with which they feel comfortable, then do it for the class. (e.g., "Jones residence, Chris speaking.")

2) If you answer the phone and someone wants to speak to the adult in the house, and she has said she does not want to talk to anyone, what is a courteous and honest way to tell that to the caller. (Avoid lying and saying "She's not home". Could be an expression such as "She's not available right now." or "She can't come to the phone at the moment. May I take a message?")



## Virtues Reflection Questions

- How do you and your friends show courtesy when you greet each other?
- How does it feel to you when someone is not courteous? When someone is courteous?
- How does it feel to you when you are not courteous? When you are courteous?
- How do people tend to react if you disrespect them by forgetting courtesy?
- What can you do if you have "slipped" and forgotten to be courteous?
- Who in your family needs more courtesy from you?
- What is the difference between making a demand and making a request? (You may want to role play the "before" and "after", first without courtesy, then with courtesy.)



## Drawing Courtesy

Draw a picture of two animals greeting each other without courtesy, then greeting each other with courtesy.



## Poster Points

- Remember your manners.
- Courtesy smooths the way.
- Smile! It's easy.
- Take courtesy home.
- Just say, "please".



## Quotable Quotes

*"Life is not so short but that there is always time enough for courtesy."* Ralph Waldo Emerson

*"If a man be gracious and courteous to strangers, it shows he is a citizen of the world."*  
Francis Bacon

*"Use a sweet tongue, courtesy, and gentleness and thou mayest manage to guide an elephant by a hair."* Sa'di

*"Politeness is to do and say the kindest things in the kindest way."* Anonymous

*"Most smiles are started by another smile."*  
Anonymous

*"Of all the things you wear, your expression is the most important."* Janet Lane

### BROO NANSI AND SISTER CANDLEFLY

Sister Candlefly was lucky. She carried with her a beam of light with which she could light up the darkest night. So powerful was her beam that the other animals often paid her money to light their way when they knew they would be out late at night. Now, of all the animals, Broo Nansi was the laziest. He would sit outside his gate nodding and greeting passerbys instead of working. He was always asking for something to borrow. One time he wanted a cup of sugar, another time a hand of bananas, and still another some sweet cassava.

One day Broo Nansi's fire went out. Since Candlefly was his nearest neighbor, Nansi decided to go to her and borrow some fire. When he arrived, Candlefly was busy with her housework, but she was kind enough to stop and catch a brand for Broo Nansi. Not only did she give him some fire, but she also gave him some eggs. She said, "Broo Nansi, I know how much you like eggs. Here, take a few with you."



"Thank you, Sister Candlefly, thank you," Nansi beamed. He was delighted. The eggs were so delicious that next day Broo Nansi went back for some more fire. Candlefly gave him some fire and four more eggs. Next day, the same story. Candlefly gave him fire and one egg. Nansi was so greedy, he put the fire out, ate the egg, and returned to Sister Candlefly.

"See," he said, "the fire you gave me was no good. It went out." Candlefly gave him some more fire but no eggs. Nansi hung around hoping that she would offer him at least one egg, but to no avail. Finally he could stand it no longer.

"Sister Candlefly, couldn't you give me just one more egg?"



"Alright, Broo Nansi, I will give you one more egg, and since you like them so much I will show you where you can get as many eggs as you please. Come by tonight and I will show you."

Broo Nansi was overjoyed. All the eggs he wanted. He went home, found a very large sack and sat around waiting for evening. Evening was never so long in coming. At last, at three o'clock he took his sack and went to Candlefly's house.

She saw him and called out, "Broo Nansi, that is a very large sack! Anyway, I cannot guide you to the place until nightfall. You are too early!"

Nansi sat and waited, complaining all the while. He fussed with the Cricket, Crapaud, and Breeze, because they didn't start heralding night an hour earlier than usual. Eventually it was time to go. Candlefly guided him through the night to a place with nothing but eggs. Large eggs, small eggs, brown eggs, white eggs, all kinds of eggs. When Broo Nansi saw so many eggs, his greediness got the better of him. Every egg Candlefly saw and shone her light on, he cried, "It's mine, it's mine. I saw it first." Soon he had fifty eggs, then one hundred, and still he cried, "It's mine, it's mine. I saw it first!"

Since Candlefly was weaker than Broo Nansi, she was unable to take the eggs away from him. She finally grew tired of his greediness and told him, "Broo Nansi, you are much too greedy. I will leave you here to find your way home." And she flew off. Nansi stumbled and stumbled and finally found himself on a familiar road, but without his bag of eggs. He had to leave that behind in the dark. He cannot find his way back to Egg Valley and Candlefly refuses to guide him. This is why you find Broo Nansi spinning web after web in the fields on the roads, anywhere at all. He is trying to find his way back to Egg Valley.

# **FRIENDLINESS**

***Friendliness*** is being a friend through good times and bad. You take an interest in other people and make them feel welcome. You share your belongings, your time and yourself.

Friendliness is the best cure for loneliness.

“I don’t need a certain number of friends, just a number of friends I can be certain of.”

*Alice Walker*

## **The Practice of Friendliness**

*... I practice friendliness when I ...*

Like myself and know I have a lot to offer.

Smile and greet people courteously.

Get to know people and let them know me.

Show caring when a friend needs me.

Am friendly to people who look and act differently.

Make someone new feel welcome.

## **Affirmation:**

I am friendly. I show an interest in others by being warm and courteous.

I am a loyal friend. My friendship is a worthy gift.

## **CULTURAL PROVERBS**

Every skin teeth ain’ a grin.

Good frien’ betta dan money ah pocket

## **Meanings:**

Every smile isn’t genuine.

A friend is worth more than money; Money can’t buy a true friend.

## **ISLAND STORIES**

“Broo Nansi and Broo Rabbit”

Broo ‘Nansi A Selection of Anansi Stories

collected and transcribed by Lezmore E. Emanuel, Ph.D.

Explore what the lack of true friendship resulted among two friends!

# Activities with Friendliness



## A Friendly Week

Make a commitment together as a class to be friendly to at least one new person a day for a week and share about it on the last day of the week. Questions to ask are:

- What was hard about it?
- What was easy about it?
- How did it feel to be friendlier?
- Did you meet anyone you would not have met before?
- How has your friendliness helped make our school/club/camp a better place?



## Virtues Reflection Questions

- What are some of the challenges or obstacles to being friendly?
- What are the characteristics of a best friend?
- What would a good friend do if someone was sad?
- How can you be friendly with someone without making it into a "best friends" situation?
- What happens when cliques form and they are unfriendly to everyone else?
- Name three things you can do to have more friends.



## Drawing Friendliness

Draw a picture of people being friendly.



## Poster Points

- A friend through good times and bad.
- Always a friend.
- Friendliness is contagious.
- There are a lot of interesting people out there.



## Quotable Quotes

*"Don't walk in front of me  
I may not follow  
Don't walk behind me  
I may not lead  
Walk beside me  
And just be my friend."*  
Albert Camus

*"The friendship that can cease has never been real."* St. Jerome

*"The best way to have a friend is to be one."*  
Peggy Jenkins

*"A friend loves you enough to support you and to confront you."* Anonymous

*"The world is like a mirror  
Reflecting what you do,  
And if your face is smiling  
It smiles right back at you."*  
Unknown

*"To be a friend, remember that we are human magnets; that like attracts like and that as we give we get."*  
Wilfred Peterson



## BROO NANSI AND BROO RABBIT

Broo Nansi and Broo Rabbit were friends. But, as always, they were forever trying to get the best of one another. One day, Broo Nansi went out to find meat for his family. He crept into his neighbor Tukuma's yard and stole a pig, a dog, and a goat. He hid the stolen animals in the earth and went home, intending to return later for his spoils. While he was hiding the meat, Broo Rabbit hid himself in a nearby bush and observed the hiding place. He said to himself, "Broo Nansi thinks he is smart, but I am smarter. As soon as the sun goes down, I will go and dig up the meat myself." And he hopped gleefully away.

At sundown, Rabbit stole back into the woods, dug up the meat, and reburied it in a different spot. "Nansi will never find the meat now," he chuckled. "I must hide so I can watch his face when he discovers that the meat is gone." So Rabbit hid nearby.

By and by Nansi came along, walking with great care so as not to arouse the sleeping denizens of the woods. He dug up the spot where he had hidden the meat and to his astonishment found the meat gone! At first he was speechless, then he was furious. He was so angry that he stuttered when he spoke. "B-b-but w-w-what is this? I left my meat here and now it's gone."

Broo Ant, who was Nansi's friend crawled up Nansi's leg and whispered into his ear: "Your meat was stolen by Rabbit. He hid it over there."

Now Nansi knew that Broo Rabbit was tricky and he went searching for the meat in the most unlikely places. Although Ant had told him over there, the woods was a pretty big place. It happened, however, that Rabbit outsmarted himself. He had hidden the meat carelessly and one of the goat's horns was sticking up through the earth. As Nansi walked around searching for the meat, he stumbled over the horn. He kicked it several times until the goat finally cried out in pain.

By this time Nansi's anger knew no bounds. He dug into the earth and took up his meat. Then he went after Broo Rabbit. "Broo Rabbit, you know that you are a thief. Why did you steal my meat and hide it in the ground?"

"Broo Nansi, you have more nerve than a brass monkey. You are calling me a thief? Where did you get the meat in the first place? Do you think that I don't know that you stole it from Broo Tukuma?"

Nansi was so surprised and so ashamed that he turned away from Rabbit and dashed into the woods and is still there today.



# **CONSIDERATION**

***Consideration*** is being thoughtful of other people and their feelings.

You consider how your actions affect them.

You pay careful attention to what others like and don't like,  
and do things that give them happiness.

"Blessed is one ... who adds to the happiness of another."

*Zoroastrianism, Yasht 22:4*

## **The Practice of Consideration**

*... I practice consideration when I ...*

Respect other people's needs and feelings.

Consider others' needs as important as my own.

Stop and think how my actions will affect people.

Put myself in other people's shoes.

Give tender attention.

Think of little things to bring others happiness.

## **Affirmation:**

I am considerate of others. I stop and think about how my actions affect them.

I do thoughtful things for people.

## **CULTURAL PROVERBS**

Yo can promise back but yo can't promise belly.

Mash ants sof' so yoh could fine 'e guts

## **Meanings:**

Don't promise the best if you can't produce it.

Be considerate, don't overdo things.

## **ISLAND STORIES**

"Broo Nansi and Tiger's Mango Tree

Broo 'Nansi A Selection of Anansi Stories

collected and transcribed by Lezmore E. Emanuel, Ph.D.

As you read, you will discover what the lack consideration caused clever Broo Nansi!

# Activities with Consideration



## Activities with Consideration

- Make a Mind Map of the people you care about most and thoughtful things you can do to bring them happiness.
- Spend a day being considerate of everyone who crosses your path. The next day share what that felt like and what effect it seemed to have with your friends, at home, on the street, in school.
- Think of someone who needs help or kindness and do something thoughtful.
- Choose a counselor, teacher, or administrator and without telling them anything, do considerate things for that person for a week. At the end of the week, ask them what they noticed.
- Secret Pal: Each student draws a name out of a box and does something considerate for that person during the week. At the end of the week, everyone finds out who their secret pal was.



## Virtues Reflection Questions

- What is one of the most considerate things anyone ever did for you?
- What was the best surprise you ever received?
- What is one of the most considerate things you have ever done for someone else?
- How can you tell what is the best gift to give someone?
- Name three considerate things you can do that will make a big difference to your family.
- Commit to doing them! After a week, report on the differences you noticed.



## Drawing Consideration

Draw a picture of yourself doing something considerate for someone at home.



## Poster Points

- Consider this.
- Do unto others.
- Give a little.
- A little consideration goes a long way.
- Consideration brings happiness.
- Give surprises.



## Quotable Quotes

*"Let them at all times concern themselves with doing a kindly thing for one of their fellows, offering to someone love, consideration, thoughtful help."* 'Abdu'l-Baha

*"Try a little tenderness."* Song Title

*"The best portion of a good man's life, his little, nameless, unremembered acts Of kindness and of love."* William Wordsworth, "Lines Composed Above Tintern Abbey"

*"No one can sincerely try to help another without helping himself."* Anonymous

*"Life lived just to satisfy yourself never satisfies anybody."* Vic Kitchen



## BROO NANSI AND TIGER'S MANGO TREE

Broo Tiger had a beautiful mango tree. Whenever mangoes were in season, it would bear the biggest, yellowest, juiciest sweetest mangoes in the whole village. Every year it was the same thing. Nansi would try to get his hands on some of Broo Tiger's mangoes, and Broo Tiger would threaten him. Well, this time Nansi couldn't stand it any longer. He decided to trick Tiger. He went into Tiger's yard.

"Oh, Broo Tiger," he called out, "have you heard the news?"

"What news, Broo?"

"There is a big storm coming up. Everybody who has a tree in his yard has to tie himself to it to keep from being blown away."

"True? Then I had better tie myself to my mango tree." Tiger tried to tie himself but was unsuccessful. Finally Nansi tied him tightly to the tree. Then he climbed into the tree and proceeded to enjoy Broo Tiger's mangoes to his heart's content. Every time he would eat a mango he would hit Broo Tiger in the head with the seed. Broo Tiger was wringing hot. When Nansi had eaten his fill, he shook the tree and threw down all the ripe mangoes. Gathering them up in a bag, he went on his way leaving Broo Tiger tied to the tree.

Soon, along came Broo Goat. Tiger asked him to untie him. "Sorry, Broo, but I can't stop." Broo Tiger growled fiercely.

Broo Pig came bobbing along. "Please, Broo, untie me!"

"Sorry, Broo Tiger, I can't stop. I'm in a hurry." Broo Tiger growled even more fiercely.

Several hours later, along came Broo Duck-ants. Now Broo Duck-ants moves so slowly that Broo Tiger hesitated to ask him for help. But there was no one else around, so he did. Eventually, Duck-ants got Tiger untied.

"Thanks, Broo. Any relative of yours is a friend of mine."

All this time Nansi was up in a nearby tree listening. When he heard Tiger make the remark about Duck-ants' relatives, he formed a plan.

Next morning, bright and early, he presented himself to Tiger's house.

"Who is there?" they called.

"It's I, Broo Duck-ants' brother."

So they made him welcome and fed him and asked him to stay the night. Next morning Nansi ate a huge breakfast and went to take his bath. In order to bathe he had to remove his hat. As you know, Nansi is bald, so they realized that they had been tricked. Tiger chased him out of the house, and he ran into the bush and hid in an abandoned house. I hear he is still there.

# TACT

**Tact** is telling the truth kindly, considerate of how your words affect others' feelings. Think before you speak, knowing what is better left unsaid. When you are tactful, others find it easier to hear what you have to say. Tact builds bridges.

“Use a sweet tongue, courtesy, and gentleness,  
and thou mayest manage to guide an elephant by a hair.”  
*Sa'di*

## The Practice of Tact

*... I practice tact when I ...*

Am careful about the feelings of others.  
Stop myself from teasing or embarrassing others.  
Tell the truth kindly and gently.  
Decide if it is better to tell the truth or keep silent.  
Often keep unpleasant or critical thoughts to myself.  
Treat people who are different as I would treat anyone.

## Affirmation:

I am tactful. I think before I speak. I am diplomatic even when I feel strongly.  
I tell the truth kindly and gently.

## CULTURAL PROVERBS

Man yo can' beet 'tis bes' yo call ye frien.  
Me ah walk behin'

## Meanings:

Be kind and compassionate one to another.  
Be discreet and tactful in whatever you do.

## FOLKTALE

“Ghana - The Story of the Tongue”  
By Dr. Michael Lockett / The Normal Storyteller

This story speaks to the power of the tongue and the tactfulness that we all need.  
Enjoy reading!



# Activities with Tact



## Tact List

Make a list of times you especially need tact.

## Act with Tact

Read a story or show a video and have students give "Act with Tact" feedback (see page 12), a Positivity Sandwich in which they:

- 1) **Acknowledge** some virtue or positive quality in the main character
- 2) **Correct** by describing what the character could do to improve
- 3) **Thank** the character by saying something they appreciated about him or her.



## Virtues Reflection Questions

- ❖ When did you feel embarrassed by something someone said tactlessly?
- ❖ How do people feel when they have a handicap or physical difference and people tease them?
- ❖ How do you think they would like to be treated?
- ❖ What will you do the next time you come across someone who looks different?
- ❖ Come up with a tactful way to respond when others start gossiping and you don't want to?
- ❖ How would you tell something difficult to your best friend?
- ❖ When do you need people to be tactful with you?
- ❖ Name three ways you can be more tactful with people in your family.



## Drawing Tact

Draw someone with a handicap being treated normally and in a friendly manner.



## Poster Points

- ❖ Telling the truth kindly.
- ❖ Don't react – Act with Tact!
- ❖ A gentle tongue.
- ❖ Think before you speak.



## Quotable Quotes

*"If 50 million people say a foolish thing, it is still a foolish thing."* Anatole France

*"Don't talk unless you can improve the silence."*  
Laurence Coughlin

*"Loose lips sink ships."* Government slogan,  
World War II

*"Tact is after all a kind of mind reading."*  
Sarah Orne Jewett

*"Gossip is mischievous, light and easy to raise, but grievous to bear and hard to get rid of. No gossip ever dies away entirely."*  
Hesiod 700 B.C.

*"Let no one be willing to speak ill of the absent."* S. Propertius

*"He never repented that he had held his tongue, but often that he had spoken."* Plutarch

# Ghana - The Story of the Tongue

By Dr. Michael Lockett/The Normal Storyteller

## The Story of the Tongue

As Adapted by Dr. Mike Lockett, The Normal Storyteller

Once a chief in a small village in Ghana told a servant to go to the market. "Bring me the best piece of meat that is sold in the market," said the chief.

The servant obeyed and ran to the market right away. The chief was surprised when the servant came back with the tongue of a large cow that had just been butchered. It did not look like it would be good to eat. Yet when prepared by the cooks, the chief was impressed. The meat was truly delicious. It was tender and savory and quite pleasing to eat.

The chief called the servant to him again. "The tongue was truly wonderful. Now go to the market again and bring me the worst piece of meat that is sold in the market."

The servant obeyed once again. He ran right to the market. Soon he came back carrying a piece of meat that looked like the first. The chief was surprised that the servant once again brought him a tongue from another cow that had just been butchered.

"What is this?" asked the chief. When I asked you to bring me the best piece of meat, you brought me the tongue. When I asked for the worst piece of meat you brought me another tongue. Do you play games with me?"

The servant answered, "The tongue can be beautiful or ugly. It can be sweet or bitter. It depends on the words and sounds that are heard by the listener. If a person's words are kind and sweet, the tongue is at its best. It is delicious to the ear. The sounds of the tongue bring happiness. If the words we say are crude and sharp, they can be hurtful and bitter. They can bring sadness and pain."

"Thank you," said the chief. "Your words are wise." Then to his people he said, "May the words of all of us be sweet and delicious for all who hear them."

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# **HONESTY**

**Honesty** is being truthful, sincere, open, and genuine. We are content and confident to be ourselves. We see ourselves and others with unclouded eyes. We do not exaggerate to impress others. We refuse to lie, cheat, or take what is not ours. We strive to keep our promises. As we recognize illusions and self-deceptions, we gently let them go. We admit mistakes even when we know someone may be disappointed or angry. We heal old messages that tell us we are less than worthy. We stand strong, knowing that we have true value in being who we are.

“Honesty is the best policy. If I lose mine honor, I lose myself.”

*William Shakespeare*

## **The Practice of Honesty**

*... I practice honesty when I ...*

Say what I mean and mean what I say

Make promises I can keep

Tell the truth tactfully

Admit my mistakes

Refuse to lie, cheat, or steal

Am true to myself and do what I know is right

## **Affirmation:**

I am honest. I can be trusted to keep my word. I have no need to impress others.  
I accept myself. I tell the truth, kindly, and tactfully.

## **CULTURAL PROVERBS**

Honesty is the best policy.

A liar ain't got no memory.

## **Meanings:**

The best thing to do in any situation is to be honest.

It is difficult to remember something that is not true. So if you tell the truth the first time, you won't have to remember the lie you told because a liar forgets what he / she said and to whom.

## **FOLKTALE**

“Broo Nansi and Broo Tiger”

Broo 'Nansi A Selection of Anansi Stories

collected and transcribed by Lezmore E. Emanuel, Ph.D.

Learn how Broo Nansi's dishonesty hurt his friend Broo Tiger!



# Activities with Honesty



## Role Play

Have a role play of a pie salesperson trying to make a big impression, making big claims for what is for sale, and how people react. Then have a role play of the same person describing what is for sale with honesty.

## Virtues Sharing Circle

With a partner share a time you did not practice honesty and how it felt and a time you did practice honesty and how it felt. Give each other virtues acknowledgments when you are finished. "I see your (virtue) in the way you (action or behavior)."

## Story

Read a story about "Honest Abe" Lincoln and how his simple honesty won people's admiration and respect.



## Virtues Reflection Questions

- When is it the most difficult to be honest?
- Name a time you practiced honesty.
- How do you feel when someone exaggerates?
- Why do we want to impress others by exaggerating?
- What would it feel like to always tell the truth and keep our word?
- How does honesty help friendship to grow strong?
- Why is it important to be honest?



## Drawing Honesty

Draw an example of someone practicing honesty.



## Poster Points

- Honest!
- Nothing but the truth.
- What you see is what you get.



## Quotable Quotes

*"Every man takes care that his neighbor shall not cheat him. But a day comes when he begins to care that he does not cheat his neighbor. Then all goes well."*

Ralph Waldo Emerson

*"If each before his own door swept, the village would be clean."*

Scottish proverb

*"Fine words and an insinuating appearance are seldom associated with true virtue."*

Confucius

*"Honesty is contagious, just like dishonesty is contagious. We need more honesty in the world."* Anne Wilson Schaef

*"To dream of the person you would like to be is to waste the person you are."* Anonymous



## BROO NANSI AND BROO TIGER

Broo Nansi was up to his old tricks. He was in love with the king's two beautiful daughters. However, at first, neither one knew that the other was being courted by Broo Nansi. Then Nansi got so confident that he forgot to be discreet and arranged to meet both daughters at the same time. Needless to say, a grand "rougadoo" followed. Both girls accused Nansi of unfaithfulness and asked him to explain himself. For once in his life Nansi found himself at a loss. He was saved from answering by the girls being called into dinner.

That night they talked between themselves: "That Nansi deserves being taught a good lesson for trifling with our affection. If we tell our father, the king, he will kill him." "Let us not tell our father," the other sister said, "let us plan something very nasty for him." So the two of them retired to their beds and thought all night long. The next morning, the first sister said to the other: "Sister, I have thought of a good plan. Let us send a message to Broo Nansi telling him that we forgive him and to meet us in the clearing in the woods. When he gets there we will tie him up, collect some fire wood and heat a large copper pot of water." "Are we going to cook him?" asked the second sister. "No," replied the first, "we are going to douse him with the hot water. That will teach him to play around with the king's daughters!"

Nansi was overjoyed to receive the message. He decked himself out in his finest suit, took up his walking cane and strutted out. When he arrived at the clearing there were the two girls with their dark skins gleaming in the sun and their elaborate cane-row coiffures decorated with beads and flowers. They looked very beautiful indeed. Nansi walked up: "Good morning ladies. You look extremely charming this morning."

"Oh, do you think so, Broo Nansi?" asked the first sister smoothly. "Let us play a game. Let us tie you up to that tree by your waist and you try to catch us as we run by. If you catch one of us you can kiss us." And she giggled prettily.

Nansi allowed himself to be tied up. At once the two girls took off. One lugged out the huge pot and began filling it with water from the stream that ran through the clearing while the other began to gather fuel for the fire. Soon they had a nice pile of sticks, nut-meg shell and coconut shells. Then they lifted the pot of water to the fire. While the water was heating, they went off to lunch.

Nansi realized now the jam he was in and began to strain his brains for a way out. As he stood tied there, who should happen by but Broo Tiger. As soon as Nansi saw Broo Tiger he began to moan and groan: "But look at my cross, this day. The king's daughters want me to have lunch with them and eat with a knife and fork and poor me, I have never touched a knife and fork in my life."

Tiger asked, "You mean that the princesses want you to dine with them? Then why are you tied up?"

"Ah, Broo Tiger, you don't know! When I told the princesses that I could not have lunch with them, they tied me up to make sure that I remained until lunch was served. They have just gone to fetch it."

Broo Tiger was thinking, thinking all the time. He said: "Broo Nansi, you and I are good friends. I am willing to help you out of this bind. Let me release you and you tie me in your place. I know how to use a knife and fork."



Nansi said slowly, "Well, I don't want to put you in cattle belly crossway, Broo Tiger. But it would be a real help to me if you would dine with the princesses." So the two exchanged places and Nansi ran to the bushes and hid. Presently, the two girls came back. They stopped short when they saw Broo Tiger.



"Look, sister," said the second one, "the little cousin we left has turned into a big cousin."

"Big cousin," responded her sister "I will big cousin him!"

With that they lifted the pot of hot water and doused Tiger with it. With one mighty leap Tiger broke the rope and roaring with pain, bounded off through the bushes right to the place where Nansi was hiding.

He pounced on Nansi roaring: "Nansi, your life belongs to me."

But Nansi was too nimble. He fled up a tall coconut tree and hollered down: "Broo Tiger, you forget that it was just yesterday that the hunterman was looking for you? I see him coming now." Then cupping his mouth with one hand he shouted: "Hunterman, look at Tiger here."

Tiger, frightened, rushed off in the direction of the river.

Nansi called out: "Now he is gone to the riverside."

Tiger whirled about and raced off to the distant hills.

Nansi, stifling laughter, shouted out once more: "Catch him at the mountains, hunterman!"

Tiger disappeared in the distance and for all I know is running still, because they tell me he has not been seen in these parts since.



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



## 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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