



Character Counts Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness and Telling the Truth

"For every good reason there is to lie, there is a better reason to tell the truth."

Bo Bennett, American Businessman

The Trustworthiness pillar is blue and it's easy to remember with the saying "true blue". The true blue motto, "honesty is always the best policy", reflects the importance of telling the truth.

There are many reasons people lie:

- They don't want to hurt someone's feelings so they tell a white lie or fib, "*You did a great job sewing this outfit*". The truth: the seams are crooked.
- They think it might be simpler to tell a white lie, "*I'm sorry I can't come to game night because I have other plans*". The truth: you don't like to play games.
- They are afraid if they tell the truth, it might get them into trouble, "*I don't know where the clippers are*". The truth: you forgot to pack them after the last show.
- They think it might help them get ahead, "*I missed the deadline because my club leader didn't get me the paperwork in time*". The truth: you put the paperwork on the counter and it got covered up.

There are better reasons for telling the truth:

- "*You did a great job sewing this outfit*". White lies are an excuse that lets us take the easy way out. In the end, it will make your friend feel foolish when the judge gives them a red ribbon because of the way the seams are sewn.
- "*I'm sorry I can't come to game night because I have other plans*". You are probably going to get invited over to play again because they don't know that you don't like games. Lying this time sets you up to lie again.
- "*I don't know where the clippers are*". The person you lied to is going to waste their time looking for clippers that you know have been lost.
- "*I missed the deadline because my club leader didn't get me the paperwork in time*". It's cruel to blame someone else for your mistake and it will harm your relationship with that person.

Learning how to be tactful, to reply in a way that is sensitive to another's feelings, will help you to be able to tell the truth all the time. How can you phrase the truth in a way that won't hurt the other person's feelings?

- "*It looks like you had trouble staying in the seam allowance. What made it go crooked?*" vs "*You did a terrible job sewing those seams*". Maybe they were sewing too fast; maybe they sewed over a pin instead of tak-

ing it out; maybe the fabric was slippery; etc. Use this opportunity to help them learn how to improve next time.

- "*Thanks for the invitation but games aren't my thing. I would love to go to the movie though*" vs "*Games are stupid*". Even if you think games are stupid, the friend who invited you to play feels differently.

The very best reasons for telling the truth:

- Your friendships—friendships are built on trust. People will not want to be friends with you if they feel like you can't be trusted.
- Your health—even if you only fib, you feel a little sick inside. You know it's wrong. Lies are lies, no matter how big or small.



Clover Connection

Head - be honest in words and actions

Heart - tell the truth from your heart, in a tactful way

Hands - be a good friend

Health - stand up for your beliefs and do what is right.