

Classification of Character Strengths and Virtues

The following is a list of the 6 Core Virtues and 24 Signature Strengths that comprise the model of “character” put forth in Positive Psychology. They’re outlined in detail in the textbook [Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification](#) authored by Christopher Peterson and Martin Seligman, and also appear in the book [Authentic Happiness](#) authored by Martin E. Seligman.

A free survey is offered on VIACharacter.org for those who would like to discover where their greatest strengths lie, and where they need to make improvements.

Virtue #1: Wisdom and Knowledge

1. **Creativity:** Originality, thinking outside the box, doing things in new and different ways. Adaptive, possessing common sense and practical intelligence.
2. **Curiosity:** Interest in the world and a variety of topics, openness to new experiences, novelty-seeking, explorative.
3. **Judgment:** Critical thinking, open-mindedness, examining things from all sides, not jumping to conclusions. Able to change your mind based on new information.
4. **Love of Learning:** Seeks new knowledge, skills, theoretical and practical information. Interested in the synthesis and application of ideas.
5. **Perspective:** Wisdom, making sense of the world. Big picture view. Providing wise counsel and problem-solving to others.

Virtue #2: Courage

6. **Bravery:** Embracing challenges, facing fear, displaying valor, taking a stance on what one believes is right.
7. **Perseverance:** Persistent and diligent. Finishing things started, overcoming obstacles, industrious.
8. **Honesty:** Being authentic and true to oneself. Sincere, having integrity, genuine. Speaking the truth.
9. **Zest:** Approaching life with enthusiasm. Energy, vitality, engaging in things wholeheartedly.

Virtue #3: Humanity and Love

- 10. Kindness:** Doing good deeds for others, empathetic, altruistic, caring, nurturing.
- 11. Love:** Valuing close and intimate relations with others. Both loving and allowing oneself to be loved. Warm and genuine.
- 12. Social Intelligence:** Awareness of both one's own and others' motives and feelings. Social skill in perceiving and responding skillfully to people's moods, temperament, and intentions.

Virtue #4: Justice

- 13. Teamwork:** Working well with groups. Possessing good citizenship and social responsibility. Loyalty, dedication.
- 14. Fairness:** Not allowing personal bias to influence decisions about others. Treating all people equally. Abiding by principles of justice and morality.
- 15. Leadership:** Organizing group activities to get things done, positively influencing others, humane.

Virtue #5: Temperance

- 16. Forgiveness:** Forgiving others who have wronged you. Giving people a second chance. Showing mercy, accepting others' shortcomings, letting go of hurt.
- 17. Prudence:** Not acting rashly or with undue risk. Making decisions deliberately and with careful consideration. Avoiding doing things they might regret. Cautious.
- 18. Humility:** Letting one's success and accomplishments speak for themselves. Real modesty. Not regarding oneself as special.
- 19. Self-Regulation:** Exerting self-control, disciplined, managing impulses, emotions, and vices.

Virtue #6: Transcendence

- 20. Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence:** Noticing and appreciating beauty, excellence and skill in all areas of life. Having a sense of awe and wonder.
- 21. Gratitude:** Awareness of good things that happen and being thankful. Showing appreciation.
- 22. Hope:** Expecting the best in the future and working to achieve it. Optimism and positive future-mindedness.
- 23. Humor:** Playful, bringing smiles to others, lightheartedness. Seeing the lighter side of life.
- 24. Spirituality:** Having a strong belief about a higher purpose and meaning in life, and knowing where you fit in the larger scheme. Finding meaning, faith, connection to the sacred.