

CINCINNATI UPSTANDER

Character strengths are the positive parts of who we are that reflect us at our individual best. They offer a common, unifying language we can use to activate the best in ourselves and others. When we infuse this language into our daily lives, we create a ripple effect—in our families, our communities, and the world around us.



APPRECIATION OF BEAUTY

Feels awe
Notices beauty
Shows admiration



GRATITUDE

Uplifted
Thankful
Appreciates positives



HOPE

Expects the best
Looks to the future
with excitement



HUMOR

Joyful
Brings laughter
Sees the funny side



SENSE OF MEANING

Clear core values
Looks for meaning
Lives with purpose



BRAVERY

Speaks up
Faces fears
Accepts challenges



PERSEVERANCE

Works hard
Completes tasks
Overcomes barriers



HONESTY

Real
Trustworthy
True to oneself



ZEST

Energetic
Enthusiastic
Positive attitude



TEAMWORK

Helpful
Reliable
Cooperative



FAIRNESS

Respects others
Treats others fairly
Cares about what's right



LEADERSHIP

Organizes groups
Encourages others
Sets good example



LOVE

Loyal
Supportive
Values relationships



SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

Aware of emotions
Understands others'
thoughts and emotions



KINDNESS

Nice
Caring
Generous



FORGIVENESS

Accepts mistakes
Doesn't hold grudges
Gives second chances



HUMILITY

Focuses on others
Actions speak for
themselves



PRUDENCE

Careful
Practical
Plans ahead



SELF-REGULATION

Calm
Controlled
Manages feelings & actions



CREATIVITY

Unique
Inventive
Imaginative



CURIOSITY

Explores
Asks questions
Open to new ideas



JUDGMENT

Open-minded
Critical thinker
Thinks things through



LOVE OF LEARNING

Enjoys building
knowledge & skills
Looks for new things to learn



PERSPECTIVE

Wise
Gives good advice
Sees the big picture

© 2004-2019 VIA Institute on Character. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

The Nancy & David Wolf Holocaust & Humanity Center exists to ensure the lessons of the Holocaust inspire action today. We want to create a community of upstanders, who harness their character strengths to stand up for themselves and others and pursue justice, both great and small, inspiring others to do the same.



The Importance of Words

Holocaust survivor Al Miller said, “The Holocaust didn’t start with bullets; it started with words.” Antisemitic laws, propaganda, and conspiratorial thinking eroded democratic institutions in Nazi Germany and normalized violence against Jews.

How will you use your words to be an upstander?



The Power of Choice

The Holocaust exposed the depths of human brutality, but also revealed acts of extraordinary bravery, resistance, and moral clarity. Some people chose to harm, many chose to be bystanders, and a few risked everything to help. Even in the darkest times, individuals can choose to be upstanders.

You always have a choice-will you choose to stand up?



The Dangers of Dehumanization

Stripped of their dignity and portrayed as dangerous, Jews became easier to target, isolate, and kill. Dehumanization numbs empathy and opens the door to hatred, injustice, and violence. When any group is denied its humanity, mass violence becomes possible.

How will you prioritize humanity over hatred?



The Persistence of Antisemitism

The Holocaust was not a sudden event—it was the result of centuries of antisemitic myths portraying Jews as dangerous, powerful, and less than human. Antisemitism didn’t end after the Holocaust - it continues to spread through conspiracy theories and scapegoating, across political ideologies and around the world.

How will you recognize and confront antisemitism?