

In a world where we have the ability to choose who and what we want to be, I believe that it is important to choose to be a good person. I believe that being a good person means supporting others and being someone that others can rely on, even through difficult times. After all, difficult times are what build the good character that lead us to being good people. There are six pillars to building character: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caringness, and Citizenship. Of the six, I think a great deal of focus should be put on the first, trustworthiness. To me trustworthiness is what brings our world closer together.

To be trustworthy is to be reliable and have integrity. A trustworthy person will do the right thing in any given situation, whether or not there are others present. They will perform a task to the best of their ability and be someone who is often called upon because they are so dependable. This is a trait sought after by every employer and held in high regard by all of society. The importance of trustworthiness can be proven with a glance back to our history.

When we look back at an event such as a world war, we can see that when unities form such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), it is not hard to imagine the level of trustworthiness required to have another country allied with your own. One country would have to trust that all of the others will complete their parts of an agreement, and execute them efficiently and effectively. NATO relies on trustworthiness to even exist, and without this trust, it would fall apart. NATO is effectively built on trust. We still rely on NATO at the current date to maintain intercontinental peace, making it a prime example for our past, present, and future. We have to keep up our commitments to trustworthiness with the countries we chose to ally with. If our trust were to break down, then these treaties would break down, and the US would lose its confidence in having a supporting force in regards to international affairs. The fact that we have so many countries who have agreed to trust one another to maintain peace provides an important sense of security. People like to feel safe and secure. As we move forward through times of peace and war, having safety in numbers such as are present in NATO gives all of our countries a major boost in resources, people, and communications. Outside threats to our country are less of a scare when we have support from nations we can trust.

Even though the threats of outside nations on our own country are still very menacing, the people of the United States have recently placed focus on our safety within the country itself as well. Trustworthiness within a nation is vital because a country in disarray could tear itself apart. In 1775, Britain was split in two because the people did not trust that the king had their best interests in mind. They came across the sea and made a new nation that they designed specifically to be based on freedom, trustworthiness, and hard work. The country that was created was then eventually split into states, who upheld a federal government. Our ancestors knew that they did not trust one person to control a whole population, so they created a government that took in as many different ideas as possible in order to govern in a way that was beneficial to all. When early Americans first began to sort out how this type of government would work, they formed a confederation, but over time they came to find that if they could trust one another to work as a team, they would find more success in federalism. This way they could have a central government to keep everything more unified, but still have individual laws for each state's specific concerns. Through trusting each other to build a successful, new way of government, early Americans created the way of life that we know today. We will continue to change as a people, evolve as all things do, so as we move forward, it is necessary to realize that our government is likely to shift and mold to our needs. Technology, for example, was not even a consideration when our government was formed, but has now become a staple of our

daily lives. Americans must work together to keep our founding fathers' visions alive, maintaining a country built on freedom, trust, and endless hard work. America is a place people come trusting that they will find a place of opportunity based on how our country was founded.

One example that comes to mind when thinking of how our founding fathers formed a government built on trust is the fact that we have representatives who collaborate to keep individual people in mind when formulating new rules and ideas. Each state is given equal representation with two senators, plus each state is also divided into population representation through districts. When America was beginning to work out how to keep citizens involved in government decisions, they were divided between having representation based on population or based on states. Ultimately there was a compromise and a bicameral legislature was created. They formed both the House of Representatives and the Senate. Every person placed in a role of power within these legislative positions was required to be voted in by the people. This ensured that the people could trust who represented them. It is a huge potential risk to an individual if the person meant to represent them is not trustworthy. It is imperative that the representatives show moral qualities such as integrity and trustworthiness. Our present government has had backlash in this regard, many persons in power being accused of not being entirely transparent. This sort of unease in our system has created tension that should be entirely unnecessary. If people were trustworthy then there would be no reason for the shadow placed on our government. It was our founding father's intent that all elected individuals would work hard for their constituents and their communities, keeping trust at the forefront of everything that they do.

To bring home the whole topic of trustworthiness, I think it would be ignorant to not place some attention on trustworthiness within communities themselves. When we look at our country as a whole, it is easy to forget the individual people who live within it, but they are the heart of everything that our country was built for. Person to person trust is a moral so vital I believe it shadows nearly everything else. If we cannot trust each other on an individual level, then there would be a severe breakdown in our society. A person who trusts another person has inevitably formed a bond, and from there, community grows. A community could be anything from a book club to an entire town. It is any group of people with similar interests that can work together for a bigger picture. I believe that these community bonds are priceless. This comes from personal experience too. In my town, if someone needs support, our entire community is there to help. What better example of trust is there than that. The trust and love felt on an individual level like that is how I know that our world has a chance, that we are not falling to pieces as bad as what the media would like us to believe. I can trust my community to be there for me, and that creates a safety net. I know that I will never have to face the world's challenges alone, and no one else will have to either. The same relief that comes from knowing that NATO is there to protect our country also comes from knowing that people are always there to protect one another. That is reliability, and reliability is trust.

America is a chain of trustworthiness, beginning with the people trusting each other, then picking a trustworthy representative to lead their community or state, and from there the states work together to choose who will head our government. Once people are chosen for government positions, they must be trusted to make smart, efficient decisions on how to run the country and interact with the world. With such a massive responsibility, it is important that these elected officials are prime examples of trustworthiness. As America continues to evolve, issues on every level will continue to arise, and with them, more opportunities for America's people to show trustworthiness. Our communities will have to work together to decide on matters such as

town growth and construction, local law enforcement, community leaders, and most importantly, how to support each other through the highs and lows of life. Our states will continue working with the people to elect officials that will help citizens be successful in their endeavors and keep everyone safe and healthy. Our representative democracy will work with our states to create legislature that aids the people, and continues to protect America from outside threats while maintaining our trade businesses.

I know that for me personally, trustworthiness has played a huge role in my life. It has taught me how to be a person that other people can count on. I am able to help others and they know that I will be there for them. I know that as I move forward through life, I will have people to rely on because you get what you give. I firmly believe that trustworthiness should be at the most basic level of a person's morals. When we live life with trustworthiness as our guide, as an outlook on our decisions, we will be overall happier and more successful because we will find the good in ourselves and others.