

# WEEKLY QUOTES ON CHARACTER



The quotes are provided for use as daily or weekly reminders of living a life based upon the qualities and traits associated with good character. Feel free to use them according to the weekly schedule as announcements, in newsletters or printed as saying to hang on walls.

## WEEK 1

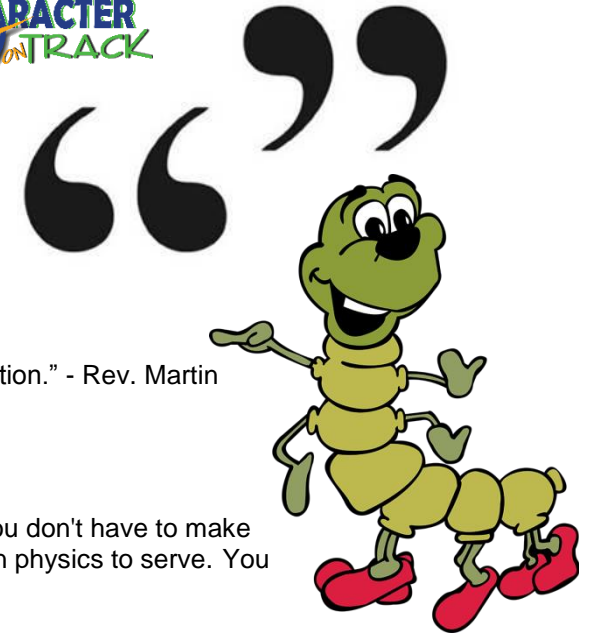
1. "Nothing is more important for the public wealth than to form and train up youth in wisdom and virtue." - Benjamin Franklin
2. "We must remember that education is not enough. Intelligence plus character – that is the true goal of education." - Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.
3. "To educate a person in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society." -Theodore Roosevelt
4. "Everybody can be great. Because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve.... You don't have to know the second theory of thermodynamics in physics to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love." – Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.
5. "Love does not consist in gazing at each other but in looking outward together in the same direction." -- Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

## WEEK 2

1. "Watch your thoughts; they become words. Watch your words; they become actions. Watch your actions; they become habits. Watch your habits; they become character. Watch your character; it becomes your destiny." - Unknown
2. This quote is widely attributed to "Frank Outlaw" on the Web, but I've found no confirmation that this is the correct source. Popular quotation books — including *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations* (17th ed., 2002), *Roget's International Thesaurus of Quotations* (1970) and *The Harper Book of Quotations* (3rd ed., 1993) — do not include this quote or any reference to Frank Outlaw.
3. "Character is the inward motivation to do what is right, whatever the cost." - International Association of Cities of Character
4. "Success means doing the best we can with what we have. Success is in the doing, not the getting-in the trying, not the triumph." - Wynn Davis
5. "Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms--to choose one's attitude in any given circumstances, to choose one's own way." -- Victor E. Frankl
6. "Live that you wouldn't be ashamed to sell the family parrot to the town gossip." -- Will Rogers

## WEEK 3

1. "To be what we are, and to become what we are capable of becoming, is the only end of life." - Robert Louis Stevenson
2. "Life is a series of problems. Do you want to moan about them or solve them?" - M. Scott Peck



3. "If I were asked to give what I consider the single most useful bit of advice for all humanity it would be this: Expect trouble as an inevitable part of life and when it comes, hold your head high, look it squarely in the eye and say, "I will be bigger than you. You cannot defeat me." - Ann Landers
4. "Good actions are the invisible hinges of the doors of heaven." -- Victor Hugo
5. "Society's demands for moral authority and character increase as the importance of the position increases." -- John Adams

#### **WEEK 4**

1. "The greatest power that a person possesses is the power to choose." - J. Martin Kohe
2. "Our attitudes propel us forward toward our victories or bog us down in defeat. They are the foothold beneath us in every step we take. They are what others see most of the personality within us; they describe us and define us, projecting the image we present to the world around us. Our attitudes make us rich or poor, happy or unhappy, fulfilled or incomplete. They are the single most determining factor in every action we will ever make. We and our attitudes are inextricably combined; we are our attitudes and our attitudes are us." - Shad Helmstetter
3. "Your living is determined not so much by what life brings to you as by the attitude you bring to life; not so much by what happens to you as by the way your mind looks at what happens." - John Homer Miller
4. "The price of hating other human beings is loving one's own self less." -- Eldridge Cleaver
5. "In spite of everything, I still believe that people are really good at heart." -- Anne Frank, from her diary, 1944

#### **WEEK 5**

1. "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." - Aristotle
2. "Treat other people exactly as you would like to be treated by them..." - Matthew 7:12
3. "When...we, as individuals, obey laws that direct us to behave for the welfare of the community as a whole, we are indirectly helping to promote the pursuit of happiness by our fellow human beings." - Aristotle
4. "Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all others." – Cicero
5. "The world has achieved brilliance without conscience. Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants." -- General Omar Bradley, Armistice Day, 1948

#### **WEEK 6**

1. "The truth never becomes clear as long as we assume that each one of us, individually, is the center of the universe." - Thomas Merton
2. "Our rewards in life will always be in exact proportion to the amount of consideration we show toward others. People with goals succeed because they know where they are going." - Earl Nightingale
3. "This above all, to thine own self be true, And it must follow, as the night the day,
4. Thou canst not then be false to any man. " - Shakespeare
5. "Integrity is telling myself the truth. And honesty is telling the truth to other people." -- Spencer Johnson

6. "Virtue is harder to be got than knowledge of the world; and, if lost in a young man, is seldom recovered." -- John Locke

### WEEK 7

1. "Virtually nothing on earth can stop a person with a positive attitude who has his goal clearly in sight. " - Denis Waitley
2. "There is only one way to cope with life, namely, to find that system of values which is not subject to fashionable trends,...which will never change, and will always bear good fruit in terms of bringing us peace and health and assurance, even in the midst of a very insecure world. " - Dr. Thomas Hora
3. "Decide what you want, decide what you are willing to exchange for it, establish your priorities and go to work! " - H. Lamar Hunt
4. "Goodness is a perpetual quantity, all penetrating, all searching, impartial, noble, a comfort in distress, a refuge to the weak, a tower and a defense to all who wish to be right and to do right." -- Joseph Parker
5. "Distrust that man who tells you to distrust. He takes the measure of his own small soul, and thinks the world no larger." -- Ella Wheeler

### WEEK 8

1. "Discipline means choices. Every time you say yes to a goal or objective, you say no to many more. True discipline isn't on your back needling you with imperatives; it is at your side, nudging you with incentives. When you understand that discipline is self-caring, not self-castigating, you won't cringe at its mention, but will cultivate it. " - Sybil Stanton
2. "Always concentrate on the most valuable use of your time. This is what separates the winners from the losers. Self-esteem is the reputation you have with yourself. " - Brian Tracy
3. "The mind is a bit like a garden. If it isn't fed and cultivated, weeds will take it over." - Erwin G. Hall
4. "People may excite in themselves a glow of compassion, not by toasting their feet at the fire, and saying: "Lord, teach me compassion," but by going and seeking an object that requires compassion -- Henry Ward Beecher
5. "There is nothing in which people more betray their character than in what they laugh at." -- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

### WEEK 9

1. "I divide the world into learners and non-learners. There are people who learn, who are open to what happens around them, who listen, who hear the lessons. When they do something stupid, they don't do it again. And when they do something that works a little bit, they do it even better and harder the next time. The question to ask is not whether you are a success or a failure, but whether you are a learner or a non-learner." - Benjamin Barber
2. "Don't be afraid to fail. Don't waste energy trying to cover up failure. Learn from your failures and go on to the next challenge. It's OK to fail. If you're not failing you're not growing." - H. Stanley Judd
3. "Everybody has an instinctive desire to do good things and avoid evil. But that desire is sterile as long as we have no experience of what it means to be good...." - Thomas Merton, Thoughts In Solitude, IV
4. "I hope I shall possess firmness and virtue enough to maintain what I consider the most enviable of all titles, the character of an honest man." -- George Washington
5. "True worth is in being, not seeming- In doing, each day that goes by, Some little good, not in the dreaming Of great things to do by and by. For whatever men say in their blindness, And spite of the fancies of youth, There's nothing so kingly as kindness, And nothing so royal as truth." -- Alice Cary

### **WEEK 10**

1. "The final forming of a person's character lies in their own hands." - Anne Frank
2. "Character is higher than intellect." - Ralph Waldo Emerson
3. "Excellence is habit." - Aristotle
4. "Goodness is the only investment that never fails." -- Henry David Thoreau
5. "Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier." -- Mother Teresa

### **WEEK 11**

1. "What you are thunders so that I cannot hear what you say to the contrary." - Ralph Waldo Emerson
2. "You can follow all the rules and still be unethical." - Russell Gough
3. "Nothing is more important for the public wealth than to form and train youth in wisdom and virtue. Only a virtuous people are capable of freedom." - Benjamin Franklin
4. "They say there are no heroes any more. But they're there. Walk down any street and you will find them. The mothers who work, the fathers who strive, the children who overcome. They aren't larger than life, but they are larger than their lives. Their names aren't famous, but their virtues are. Hard work. Common sense. An unshakable belief in themselves. If you're looking for a hero, look around." -- Merrill Lynch ad (April 1999, "Human Achievement")
5. "The moral universe rests upon the breath of schoolchildren." -- Rabbi Yehuda Nisiah (circa 250 B.C.)

### **WEEK 12**

1. "No one who desires to become good will become good unless he does good things."- Aristotle
2. "People of character don't allow the environment to dictate their style." - Lucille Kallen
3. "A man never describes his own character so clearly as when he describes another's."-- Jean Paul Richter
4. "When you're consistently out of touch, you LOSE touch." -- Russell Gough
5. "I hate it when people blame someone else and don't take responsibility." -- Bill Clinton (discussing with Virginia students the problems he sees with American youth that may have led to the high school shootings in Littleton, CO)

### **WEEK 13**

1. "Character is always lost when a high ideal is sacrificed on the altar of conformity and popularity." - Anonymous
2. "Character is destiny." - Heraclitus

3. "Talent develops in quiet, alone; character is sharpened in the torrent of the world."  
-- Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe
4. "Unethical practices are always self-destructive over the long run, on both a personal and an organizational level." -- Tom Morris (from If Aristotle Ran General Motors)
5. "The way to love anything is to realize that it might be lost." -- Gilbert K. Chesterton

#### **WEEK 14**

1. "The greatest influence for good comes from those quiet folks who make morals, not moralizing, their vocation." - Lawrence Reed
2. "It's not hard to make decisions when you know what your values are." - Roy Disney
3. "Character is what you are in the dark." - Dwight L. Moody
4. "What you don't see with your eyes, don't witness with your mouth." - Jewish proverb
5. "Truth is like the sun. You can shut it out for a time, but it ain't goin' away." - Elvis Presley

#### **WEEK 15**

1. "Curb your talent lest it speed where virtue does not guide." - Dante
2. "Ill habits gather by unseen degrees, as brooks make rivers, rivers run into seas." - Ovid
3. "It is curious that physical courage should be so common in the world and moral courage so rare." - Mark Twain
4. "Don't worry that children never listen to you. Worry that they are always watching you." - Robert Fulghum, 20th-century American author
5. "You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth." - Kahlil Gilbran

#### **WEEK 16**

1. "The only training for the heroic is the mundane." - Edmund Burke
2. "Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts." - Albert Einstein
3. "If you were to sell your character, would you get full retail or would it go for a bargain-basement price?" - H. Jackson Brown
4. "When somebody lies, somebody loses." - Stephanie Ericsson
5. "Flattery makes friends, truth enemies." - Spanish proverb

#### **WEEK 17**

1. "In matters of style, swim with the current; in matters of principle, stand like a rock."-- Thomas Jefferson
2. "The foundations of our national policy will be laid in the pure and immutable principles of private morality." - George Washington, First Inaugural

3. "Rare is the person who can weigh the faults of others without his thumb on the scale."-- Byron Langfeld
4. "Parents wonder why the streams are bitter, when they themselves have poisoned the fountain." - John Locke
5. "The value of marriage is not that adults produce children but that children produce adults." - Peter de Vries

#### **WEEK 18**

1. ". . . in about the same degree as you are helpful, you will be happy." - Karl Reiland
2. "When you know you're right, you can afford to be gracious." - Anonymous
3. "Self-respect cannot be hunted. It cannot be purchased. It is never for sale. It cannot be fabricated out of public relations. It comes to us when we are alone, in quiet moments, in quiet places, when we suddenly realize that, knowing the good, we have done it; knowing the beautiful we have served it; knowing the truth, we have spoken it." - Noel Coward
4. "Children need models rather than critics." - Joseph Joubert
5. "It takes a long time to grow young." - Pablo Picasso, 20th-century Spanish artist

#### **WEEK 19**

1. "You can best reward a liar by believing nothing of what he says." - Aristippus
2. "It is a grand mistake to think of being great without goodness; and I pronounce it as certain that there was never yet a truly great man that was not at the same time truly virtuous." - Benjamin Franklin
3. "The death of democracy is not likely to be an assassination from ambush. It will be a slow extinction from apathy, indifference, and undernourishment." - Robert Maynard Hutchins
4. "Everybody gets so much information all day long that they lose their common sense." - Gertrude Stein
5. "It takes a whole village to raise a child." - Ashanti proverb

#### **WEEK 20**

1. "Ethics is a matter of being good (character) and doing right (action)." - Russell Gough
2. The best index to a person's character is (a) how he treats people who can't do him any good, and (b) how he treats people who can't fight back.  
- Abigail Van Buren
3. "Tell me and I forget, teach me and I remember, involve me and I learn." - Benjamin Franklin
4. "The question for the child is not 'Do I want to be good?' but 'Whom do I want to be like?'" - Bruno Bettelheim, 20th -century German/American child psychologist
5. "Example has more followers than reason." - Bovee

## WEEK 21

1. "Character cannot be summoned at the moment of crisis if it has been squandered by many years of compromise and rationalization. The only testing ground for the heroic is the mundane. The only preparation for that one profound decision which can change a life is those hundreds of self-defining seemingly insignificant decisions made in private. Habit is the daily battleground of character." - Senator Dan Coats
2. "No one need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world." - Anne Frank
3. "Humility in our quest for success provides for the strongest sort of sustainable leadership, and facilitates the attainment of true success. It is the core of moral character and is a surprising springboard to both personal and competitive excellence." - Tom Morris
4. "The words you speak today should be soft and tender ... for tomorrow you may have to eat them." - Unknown
5. "Every man is to be respected as an absolute end in himself; and it is a crime against the dignity that belongs to him as a human being, to use him as a mere means for some external purpose." - Immanuel Kant, 18th century Prussian geographer and philosopher

## WEEK 22

1. "To point out the importance of circumspection in your conduct, it may be proper to observe that a good moral character is the first essential in a man, and that the habits contracted at your age are generally indelible, and your conduct here may stamp your character through life. It is therefore highly important that you should endeavor not only to be learned but virtuous." - George Washington, in a letter to his nephew in 1790
2. "Nothing does reason more right, than the coolness of those that offer it: For Truth often suffers more by the heat of its defenders, than from the arguments of its opposers."-- William Penn
3. "There is no need to suppose that human beings differ very much one from another; but it is true that the ones who come out on top are the ones who have been trained in the hardest school." - Thucydides
4. "Never look down on anybody unless you're helping him up." - Jesse Jackson
5. "Animals don't hate, and we're supposed to be better than them." - Elvis Presley

## WEEK 23

1. "The pleasure of a good act is something to be remembered -- not in order to feed our complacency but in order to remind us that virtuous actions are not only possible and valuable, but that they can become easier and more delightful and more fruitful than the acts of vice which oppose and frustrate them." - Thomas Merton, Thoughts In Solitude
2. "No one gossips about other people's secret virtues." - Bertrand Russell
3. "Character is indeed displayed in pressure-packed situations, but not merely so. For better or worse, every display of character contributes to character." - Russell Gough
4. "What a man accomplishes in a day depends upon the way in which he approaches his tasks. When we accept tough jobs as a challenge. . . and wade into them with joy and enthusiasm, miracles can happen. When we do our work with a dynamic conquering spirit, we get things done." - Arland Gilbert

5. "Zeal will do more than knowledge." - William Hazlitt, early 18th-century English essayist and literary critic

#### **WEEK 24**

1. "Hope is the struggle of the soul, breaking loose from what is perishable, and attesting her eternity." - Herman Melville
2. "Everybody thinks of changing humanity and nobody thinks of changing himself." - Leo Tolstoy
3. "After climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb." - Nelson Mandela
4. "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." - Margaret Mead
5. "The conclusions of passion are the only reliable ones." - Soren Kierkegaard, early 19th-century Danish philosopher

#### **WEEK 25**

1. "Be the kind of person that you want people to think you are." - Socrates
2. "Whatever you would make habitual, practice it; and if you would not make a thing habitual, do not practice it, but habituate yourself to something else."  
- Epictetus ("How the Semblances of Things are to be combated," Chap. xviii)
3. "The way to love anything is to realize that it might be lost." - Gilbert K. Chesterton
4. "What is important is not what happens to us, but how we respond to what happens to us." - Jean-Paul Sartre
5. "Everything that is done in the world is done by hope." - Martin Luther

#### **WEEK 26**

1. "Unethical practices are always self-destructive over the long run, on both a personal and an organizational level." - Tom Morris
2. "If you are neutral in a situation of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has his tail on the foot of a mouse, and you say you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality." - Desmond Tutu
3. "If it was necessary to tolerate in other people everything that one permits in oneself, life would be unbearable." - Georges Courteline
4. "Weakness of attitude becomes weakness of character." - Albert Einstein
5. "I'm an idealist. I don't know where I'm going but I'm on the way." - Carl Sandburg

#### **WEEK 27**

1. "Character Education helps to create an environment for caring and learning in schools."- Thomas Lickona
2. "Of all the properties that belong to honorable men, not one is so highly prized as character." - Henry Clay
3. "In any moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing." - Teddy Roosevelt



4. "Ideals are like stars; you will not succeed in touching them with your hands. But like the seafaring man on the desert of waters, you choose them as your guides, and following them you will reach your destiny." - Carl Schurz, 19th-century German-American politician
5. "There is no such thing as bad weather, only different kinds of good weather." - John Ruskin, 19th-century British critic and author

### **WEEK 28**

1. "Your personality is what you are in front of people; your character is who you are when nobody else is looking." - Mary Levy
2. "The life you live is the life you teach." - Anonymous
3. "A lie has speed, but truth has endurance." - Edgar J. Mohn
4. "If you add to the truth, you subtract from it." - The Talmud
5. "Character is that which is left even when hope is gone." - Anonymous

### **WEEK 29**

1. "The purpose of life is to live a life of purpose." - Robert Byrne
2. "We are the heroes of our story." - Anonymous
3. "What the teacher is, is more important than what he teaches." - Karl Menninger
4. "An overdose of praise is like 10 lumps of sugar in coffee; only a very few people can swallow it." - Emily Post
5. "The pursuit of truth will set you free — even if you never catch up with it." - Clarence Darrow

### **WEEK 30**

1. "Respect is the thread that weaves throughout all human encounters." - Anonymous
2. "The greatest reward is not what we receive for our labor, but what we become by it." -John Ruskin
3. "The happiness of our life can depend on the character of our thoughts." - Anonymous
4. "We must not promise what we ought not, lest we be called on to perform what we cannot." - Abraham Lincoln
5. "The truth is not always the same as the majority decision." - Pope John Paul II

### **WEEK 31**

1. "It is hard to make your adversaries real people unless you recognize yourself in them—in which case, if you don't watch out, they cease to be adversaries." - Flannery O'Connor
2. "The gift our enemy may be able to bring us: to see aspects of ourselves that we cannot discover any other way than through our enemies. Our friends seldom tell us these things; they are our friends precisely because they are able to overlook or ignore this part of us. The enemy is thus not merely a hurdle to be leaped on the way to God. The enemy can be the way to God. We cannot come to terms with our shadow except through our enemies." - Walter Wink (from Engaging the Powers)

3. "All wars are civil wars, because all men are brothers. Each one owes infinitely more to the human race than to the particular country in which he was born." - François Fenelon
4. "As scarce as truth is, the supply has always been in excess of the demand." - Josh Billings (Henry Wheeler Shaw), 19th-century American humorist
5. "A promise made is a debt unpaid." - Robert W. Service (in "The Cremation of Sam McGee," 1907)

### **WEEK 32**

1. "There is no greater crime than to stand between a man and his development; to take any law or institution and put it around him like a collar, and fasten it there, so that as he grows and enlarges, he presses against it till he suffocates and dies." - Henry Ward Beecher
2. "But rules cannot substitute for character." — Alan Greenspan
3. "A society based on the letter of the law and never reaching any higher, fails to take advantage of the full range of human possibilities. The letter of the law is too cold and formal to have a beneficial influence on society. Whenever the tissue of life is woven of legalistic relationships, this creates an atmosphere of spiritual mediocrity that paralyzes men's noblest impulses.... After a certain level of the problem has been reached, legalistic thinking induces paralysis; it prevents one from seeing the scale and the meaning of events." - Alexander Solzhenitsyn (1918- ; Russian writer, Soviet Union dissident)
4. "The value of life is not in the length of days, but in the use we make of them; a man may live long yet very little." - Michel de Montaigne, 16th-century French man of letters and essayist
5. "We cannot do everything at once, but we can do something at once." - Calvin Coolidge

### **WEEK 33**

1. "We are better givers than getters, not because we are generous people, but because we are proud, arrogant people. The Christmas story--the one according to Luke, not Dickens--is not about how blessed it is to be givers but about how essential it is to see ourselves as receivers." - William Willimon
2. "The person of intellect is lost unless they unite with energy of character. When we have the lantern of Diogenes we must also have his staff." -- Sebastien-Roch Nicolas de Chamfort (1741-1794; French writer)
3. "Character is like a tree and reputation like its shadow. The shadow is what we think of it; the tree is the real thing." — Abraham Lincoln
4. "People of character don't allow the environment to dictate their style." -- Lucille Kallen
5. "If you let a child know that you think he is lazy, sloppy, untruthful, unpleasant, and thoughtless, he'll probably prove you are right. Obviously, it is much better to make him stretch to reach a positive image than stoop to match one at ground level." -- Dr. James Dobson

### **WEEK 34**

1. "A person's character is what it is. It's a little like a marriage – only without the option of divorce. You can work on it and try to make it better, but basically you have to take the bitter with the sweet." - Henrik Hertzberg, 20th-century American editor and journalist
2. "Fame is a vapor, popularity an accident, riches take wing, and only character endures." - Horace Greeley
3. "If we want our children to possess the traits of character we most admire, we need to teach them what those traits are and why they deserve both admiration and allegiance. Children must learn to identify the forms and content of those traits." - William J. Bennett, former U.S. Secretary of Education

4. "Three characters can be found in a man about to perform a good deed: If he says, 'I shall do it soon,' his character is poor. If he says, 'I am ready to do it now,' his character is of average quality. If he says, 'I am doing it,' his character is praiseworthy." -- Hasidic saying
5. "Character is always lost when a high ideal is sacrificed on the altar of conformity and popularity." – Anonymous

### **WEEK 35**

1. "Character is much easier kept than recovered." - Thomas Paine
2. "You can't escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today." - Abraham Lincoln
3. "Provision for others is the fundamental responsibility of human life." — Woodrow Wilson
4. "Rare is the person who can weigh the faults of others without his thumb on the scale." -- Byron Langfeld
5. "Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts." -- Albert Einstein

### **WEEK 36**

1. "I am only one, but still, I am one. I cannot do everything but I can do something. And, because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do what I can." - Edward Everett Hale
2. "It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness." - Chinese proverb
3. "Responsibility is to keep the ability to respond" - Robert Duncan
4. "The struggle for your own character is the struggle for the nation's character." -- President Clinton, citing a Chinese academic in a speech at Beijing University, 6-28-98
5. "Good sportsmanship is not picking up lost golf balls while they are still rolling." -- Mark Twain