

# Duty, Determination and Unexpected Blessings

## New employee goes the extra MANY miles & inspires others

*This lesson can be presented over 1-2 sessions. If you choose 2 sessions you can use the discussion questions, journal writing and extended activities designated by session (A) and session (B). Instructors should feel free to use whichever activities you think best for your class or group. We advise giving students the sheet with the definitions of the virtues before each session.*

### Lesson Goals

Help students:

- gain a better understanding of the virtues of duty and determination and how these build on each other and can be lived out in our lives. The virtue of duty sets out in part what we decide we should do, while living with determination and firmness of purpose help us take the actions necessary to achieve our duty.
- realize how in making the right smaller decisions we form the habits, the character traits that will help us to become the best version of ourselves and to achieve our goals.
- look for opportunities to establish solidarity with others, even with those we may think we have little or nothing in common.
- appreciate how by living out the virtues they will positively influence others and inspire others to also carry out good deeds.

### Primary Virtues

**Duty** - something that one is expected or required to do according to one's own standards; duty can also come from what is expected of us as citizens of our local community, nation and other communities

**Determination** – firmness of purpose; a strong commitment to achieving a goal

**Solidarity** - unity from a shared common purpose and / or interest; active loyalty within a group; mutual support within a group; being present with others

### Secondary Virtues

**Empathy** - trying to understand another person's situation, entering into the feeling or spirit of others and imagining yourself in another person's situation

**Generosity** - giving freely of our own possessions, time and/or talent

**Resilience** – the ability to recover from, or to constructively adjust to difficulties. Choosing to use setbacks as opportunities to learn and grow

**Trustworthy** – to be a person worthy of confidence where others can rely on us to do or to provide what is right or needed

## Leader Introduction

How much effort do we put into meeting our commitments? It's a question that all of us encounter with our school work, with our sports teams and club activities, within our families and even among our friends. We are going to watch the story of one young man who this summer provided an exceptional answer to this question. As Walter Carr talks about his life and this story let's watch for the virtues that have made Walter a truly exceptional and inspiring young man.

## Film Clip:

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=c1vHH8GFEOk>

## Leader Summary

What an incredible story – the kind of story that makes most of us consider whether we should “up our game” in how much effort we put into our commitments and relationships. The film clip didn't include another part of Walter's story. A little more than halfway into his walk he was stopped by a police officer asking why he was walking along the road at 4AM. Upon hearing Walter's story that officer organized another two officers to take Walter out for breakfast. After breakfast, another officer drove Walter the final leg to the Lamey's home. It's amazing to see how many other people Walter inspired to carry out good deeds. Let's talk about how Walter's story, and the virtues he lives out, speak to our lives.

## Discussion Question Options *(discussion prompts / answers are in parentheses if needed)*

Before beginning our discussion let's read over the virtues and their definitions *(included within the online lesson as a separate document)*.

1. Walter decided to get up at midnight and walk 20 miles to his job but what other choices could Walter have made in response to the obstacle of his car breaking down?

Before seeing Walter's story what choice do you think you would have made, and after seeing his story does this change what you would now do if confronted with a similar situation where a serious obstacle could prevent you from living up to a commitment?

2. What virtues did Walter demonstrate in his decision and his actions? Let's discuss how he lived out each one.

Duty - according to Walter's own standards he wouldn't even consider not showing up for work

Determination - having the resolve to walk through the night to make it to work on time

Resilience - adjusting to the difficulty of his car breaking down

Empathy and Solidarity – not wanting to let the Lamey family and his co-workers down by not showing up and genuinely wanting to be unified with the family and his co-workers in doing the work. )

3. Mrs. Lamey called Walter "...the poster boy for no excuses." And Walter told ABC News, "I didn't want to defeat myself." What do these statements mean to us?

Walter clearly has a strong sense of duty in what he expects of himself and his determination to follow-through on his commitments. In our lives what do you have a strong sense of duty toward?

(Encourage students to give examples from different areas of their lives such as family, school work, sports, friends, God if they are religious, working toward specific goals. This is also a journal writing option below).

4. How did Walter inspire and influence others? What actions did those other people carry out and what virtue/s did each of these actions reflect?

(Police officers seeing Walter on the side of the road listened to his story, took him to breakfast and drove him the remaining distance to the Lamey house – solidarity with someone they didn't even know and generosity.)

(Mrs. Lamey was so impressed she let his employer know what happened and began a Go Fund Me page to help Walter with the expense of repairing his car – also solidarity and generosity.)

(Mr Marklin, the CEO of the moving company, decided to donate his SUV to Walter - generosity, empathy.)

5. When Walter was 5 years old he and his mother lost their home as it was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. They started over again in Alabama. How do you think this experience may have formed his character, the kind of person, who Walter is today?
6. What do you think Walter meant when he said he felt "blessed to bless others."?

Let's share some stories where we have experienced this feeling of being blessed in being a blessing to others?

(This is also a journal writing option below)

## Journal Writing Options

1. Write about something in your life that you have a strong sense of duty towards? Describe what it is, what motivates you to want to dedicate yourself to your choice, and write about how you can fulfill this duty.

Please note that your choice can come from many different areas of your life such as family, school work, sports, friends, God if you are religious, and a future goal.

2. Write about a time that you felt blessed that you were able to be a blessing to others. Tell the story of how you blessed others by describing your action or actions, how it impacted others and how it made you feel.
3. Make a chart of the virtues which you think will help you to follow-through with your commitments. Next to each one write out a thought on why that virtue is important to achieving your goal and how you will actually put it into action.

### Extended Activity Option:

1. Organize your group into small teams. Ask each team to come up with one true story from among their own lives, or the lives of others, where that person lived or is living with a strong sense of duty and has inspired / is inspiring others. Then ask each team to present their story to the group as a whole, being sure to include:
  - general background on the person's life
  - how that person lives / lived with a strong sense of duty
  - how that person's actions positively influences / influenced others
  - other virtues the person lives / lived out

Following the presentations ask the group to vote on the most inspiring story.

# Character Action Media

*Connecting Virtues to Our World*

[www.characteractionmedia.com](http://www.characteractionmedia.com)

Current Links in Education

Copyright 2016

