



Canyon Center for Character Education (CCCE) Glossary of Terms

The CCCE Glossary of Terms encompasses many of the terms seen in character education resources; however, it should not be considered an exhaustive list of character education terminology. Instead, these terms constantly change with the growing research in the field. In addition, while these terms are defined in accordance with the GCU mission and vision and Christian worldview, readers may develop their own definitions through individual wisdom traditions. As such, individual virtues can be defined similarly through individual and community contexts.

A

Aristotelian Theories and practices based on findings of Aristotle's works surrounding ethics as shared in the foundational publication of *Nicomachean Ethics* (Aristotle, ca. 350 B.C.E./1925). See also Neo-Aristotelian.

Asset-based Approach An educational approach in which the focus is on individual strengths versus deficits.

Adjudicative Function A component of phronesis, also referred to as integrative, enables a person to identify conflicting virtues and reasons for making the right decision. See also Phronesis.

B

Blueprint A component of phronesis which includes knowledge and appreciation of flourishing life used to guide moral or ethical decision-making. See also Phronesis.

C

Character The traits and moral or ethical qualities distinctive to an individual (Arthur & Kristjansson, 2022).

Character Education The acquisition and strengthening of virtues to live a flourishing life and contribute to the betterment of society.

Citizenship **How** a responsible citizen must participate in society by understanding self, morality, and society, be motivated to act in the best interests of the common good, and have the requisite skills to do so effectively.



Citizenship Education A subset of character education, citizenship education focuses on developing the character and virtues needed to be an active and responsible citizen.

Civic Virtues Character traits that are necessary for engaged responsible citizenship and contributing to the common good (Arthur & Kristjansson, 2022). Civic virtue describes abilities, dispositions, and a deep commitment to engaged citizenship, civility, community awareness, neighborliness, service, and volunteering aimed at contributing to human flourishing and the common good.

Common Good In the best interest of all.

Community Culture The ethos or connectedness of a group of individuals that makes up a community. Core principles and ideals upon which an entire community exists.

Constitutive Function A component of phronesis meaning the ability to identify moral problems in a situation. See also Phronesis.

Critical Consciousness The ability to recognize and analyze systems of inequality and the commitment to take action against these systems.

D

E

Emotional Regulation A component of phronesis that allows the individual to have emotional understanding and the ability to bring emotional responses in line with ethical decision-making. See also Phronesis.

Ethics Moral principles that govern a person's behavior or decision-making.

Ethical Decision Making Making decisions that align with human flourishing and a thriving society; in the best interest of all involved; morally right decisions.

Ethical Formation The development of virtues that lead to ethical decision-making.

Ethos Greek word meaning "character"; used to describe guiding principles to characterize a community culture.

Equitable Fair and impartial treatment including support, guidance, education, etc. Providing opportunities that are fair and impartial for all individuals by meeting them at their level of need and supporting them accordingly.



F

Flourishing See Human Flourishing.

G

Global Contributor One who will contribute to the common good in how they interact within their communities and the world. A global contributor applies empathy, avoids self-centricity and ethnocentrism, embraces the reality that people are different and have different perspectives on history, religion, value-systems, and many other aspects of life and living. Also known as global citizen.

Golden Mean The balance of a single virtue or multiple virtues. The Golden Mean enables moral behavior, which is the mean between two extremes (excess versus deficiency).

H

Human Flourishing A state of excellence in which human beings, as individuals and in community, experience and enjoy fulfillment, peace, abundance, and completion. Flourishing entails thriving in all areas of life, striving to meet one's potential, encompassing the intellectual, moral, emotional, and spiritual aspects of a person and the communities in which people live.

I

Intellectual Virtues Character traits necessary for discernment, right action, and the pursuit of knowledge, truth, and understanding (Arthur & Kristjansson, 2022). It is expressed as virtues such as curiosity, critical thinking, judgment, discernment, reasoning, reflection, and resourcefulness.

J

K

L

M

Morality Principles and virtues concerning the distinction between right and wrong or good and bad behavior.

Moral Decision Making Making choices that align with human flourishing and a thriving society; in the best interest of all involved; ethically right decisions.



Moral Formation The development of moral virtues that lead to moral decision-making.

Moral Virtues A person with strong moral virtue will have a well-formed character that enables them to act ethically in all situations. Examples include compassion, courage, gratitude, honesty, humility, integrity, justice, respect, etc. (Arthur & Kristjansson, 2022).

N

Neo-Aristotelian The modernization of character and virtue theories and practices based on Aristotle's works surrounding ethics to shift alignment to current societal needs.

O

P

Performance Virtues Character traits that effectively equip and enable people to manage their lives for success focusing on an instrumental value in enabling the intellectual, moral, and civic virtues. Examples include confidence, determination, motivation, perseverance, resilience, teamwork, etc. (Arthur & Kristjansson, 2022).

Phronesis- In Greek translates to 'practical wisdom'; the overall quality of knowing what to want and what not to want when the demands of two or more virtues collide, and to integrate such demands into an acceptable course of action. A process for Phronesis can be made up of 4 components: the constitutive, adjudicative, emotional regulation and the blueprint (Arthur & Kristjansson, 2022).

Practical Wisdom- The integrative virtue, developed through experience and critical reflection, which enables us to perceive, know, desire and act with good sense. This includes discerning, deliberative action in situations where virtues collide (Arthur & Kristjansson, 2022). See also Phronesis.

Professional Dispositions of Learners Dispositions are the values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities that affect student learning and achievement, motivation, and development, as well as the educator's professional growth. If sincerely held, dispositions should lead to actions and patterns of professional conduct (Grand Canyon University, 2022).

Q

R



S

School Community The ethos or connectedness of a group of individuals that make up a school including but not limited to school leadership, teachers, staff, students, and families. Also see Community Culture.

Self-Assessment Assessing or evaluating one's actions, traits, behaviors, feelings, etc. to become self-aware.

Self-Awareness The realization and understanding of oneself as an individual (i.e., actions, traits, behaviors, feelings, etc.) through reflective practices.

Servant Leader One who sees leadership as an opportunity to serve others, shares responsibilities to help drive engagement, and seeks to measure success through individual and community growth.

Social Change Changes in human interactions and relationships within a society that lead to shifts in values, culture, policies, and organizations. A social change is a shift that creates a safer, healthier future for an individual, relationships, communities, and the world.

Social Change Agent A movement, effect, or individual that leads to shifts in human interaction and relationships within a society to address social problems or needs in a positive way. See also Global Contributor.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Process through which individuals learn and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions. (CASEL, 2022)

T

Thriving Society A condition of living wherein all individuals strive for sustaining safer, healthier futures by contributing toward the common good and human flourishing.

Transformative Leader One who is grounded in the reality of the world, accepts the responsibilities of individual and community choices, and leads selflessly to serve others by empowering them to meet their highest potential.

U

V

Virtue Positive personal strength (Arthur & Kristjansson, 2022).



Virtuous The development of the internal character of a person is of primary importance in character formation to ensure they can think, speak, and act with integrity.

Virtue Components- (Arthur & Kristjansson, 2022)

- **Virtue Perception** Noticing situations involving or standing in need of the virtues
- **Virtue Knowledge and Understanding** Understanding the meaning of the virtue term and why the virtue is important, individually and as a part of a well-rounded, flourishing life of overall virtue, and being able to apply the virtue to episodes of one's own and others' lives.
- **Virtue Emotion** Feeling the right virtue-relevant emotion in the right situation in the right way.
- **Virtue Identity** Understanding oneself as strongly committed to the virtues.
- **Virtue Motivation** Having a strong desire to act on the virtues.
- **Virtue Reasoning** Discernment and deliberative action about virtues, including in situations where virtues conflict or collide.
- **Virtue Action and Practice** Doing the right thing in the right way.

Virtue Literacy Developing the ability and willpower to apply virtues to real-life contexts. Virtue literacy consists of three interrelated components: virtue perception, virtue knowledge and understanding, and virtue reasoning (Arthur & Kristjansson, 2022).

Virtue Formation The actions related to forming, or the process of forming, virtues whether for individual or societal growth.

Virtuous Action Actions informed by positive personal strengths that enable one to become a morally virtuous individual who automatically thinks, speaks, and acts with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control.

W

X

Y

Z



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