

# **ARISTOTLE'S TRUISMS**

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*Man's Purpose in Life, the Pursuit of Happiness, Virtues,  
and Free Will*

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To: Larayne – my eternal partner

Barbara and Nancy, and their loving families

Norm, Ray, and Rose, and their devoted families

My deepest appreciation to Ms. Barbara Kelly Monte Carlo for her dedicated  
editing

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## FOREWARD

This treatise will serve to mobilize any dormant appreciation for Aristotelian truisms: Man's Purpose in Life, The Pursuit of Happiness, Virtues, and Free Will. In this regard, the author has composed an exciting manifestation of these classical philosophical truisms that were introduced Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. This is an important contribution because it seems that, over the years, the mindfulness and application of Aristotle's major truisms may have waned. One of the reasons for this decline may be that anyone who has attempted to read Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* soon discovers that interpreting his writings is extremely challenging. That is because the translations of his work were resurrected from accumulations of his "lecture notes," which were recorded between 384 and 325 B.C. And the sentences in these notes are telegraphic rather than scholastic in style. That is to say, his syntax is not polished, transitions are abrupt, and connections cloudy. So that, except for the esoteric reader, interpreting Aristotle's writings is a daunting task. And herein lays the significance of this publication. It is evident the author has devoted endless energies to ferret and clarify the essence of Aristotle's philosophical truisms. He has made clear the criteria for justifying happiness as man's purpose in life, characterized the pursuit of happiness, defined the essence of intellectual and moral virtues, and identified the nature of free will. Moreover, the author has made a significant contribution by expanding Aristotle's original system of virtues. And finally, the author has presented an orderly arrangement of applied examples of virtuous acts of conduct to help make clear righteous as opposed to flawed behavior.

The aim of this book is not to put forth a set of rules intended to make an individual virtuous. Rather, it is to compel the reader to explore this publication and find the answer to the question: How does one achieve happiness by living a good life?

Charles M. Micarelli,  
Professor and Dean Emeritus  
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## EXPECTATIONS

If you expect to read this book over a weekend, as you would a novel, please – stop now!

This is not a fictional, non-scholarly story published to beguile or entertain you. Rather, it is an informational treatise dedicated to providing answers to the following thought-harkening questions: What is your purpose in life? Is your free will a natural endowment that gives you the freedom to act as you wish? Does practicing the moral and intellectual virtues compel a state of happiness? Aristotle, insightfully, proposes an answer to each of these questions. However, to accept Aristotle's propositional rally to these metaphorical queries, you need to labor through his difficult-to-read treatise on ethics. And this becomes an insurmountable task for most non-philosophically groomed readers. To resolve this perplexity, I have set about trying to present Aristotle's bewildering transcriptions in more coherent prose. Hopefully my submission will be more understandable. However, because of the philosophical nature of Aristotle's writings, you must proceed to read my interpretation of his work with patient deliberation. For then, and only then, will you be able to fully appreciate Aristotle's visionary conceptualization of his purposeful and self-evident truisms: Man's Purpose in Life, the Pursuit of Happiness, Virtues and Free Will.

So if you are willing to take the time to encounter a challenging – but revealing manuscript – you can look forward to a fulfilling experience that will reveal the compelling nature of a beneficent lifestyle and consummate a state of infinite happiness.

# Chapter I

## Introduction to Aristotle

My introduction to Aristotle can be traced to the summer of 1952, when I enrolled in an elective philosophy course at De Paul University. The name of the course was “*Introduction to Aristotle*,” and the text was *Nicomachean Ethics*. In regards to this course-enrollment, it should be noted that I had never taken a course in philosophy; I was naïve concerning the significance of Aristotle; I was artless regarding the study of ethics; and the only reason I chose that course was because it fit my schedule. Since this was a course of convenience, obviously I was not in a state of learning-readiness when I attended the first class session. However, I was soon taken with the professor, as he nimbly unveiled the truisms put forth in Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*. Moreover, the professor made clear that, although Aristotle’s Truisms were recorded more than 25 centuries ago, they have withstood the “sands of time” and have remained a benchmark for contemporary philosophical thoughts concerning the relevancy of these proposed self-evident truths.

That class, that book, and that professor have had a dramatic impact on my personal life and professional career -- especially that book. It is amazing how many times I have revisited Aristotle’s, *Nicomachean Ethics*. As testimony to these endless visits, you have only to view the weary condition of this 55 year old publication. The scotch tape, that barely holds the book together, has deteriorated. The back cover and some of the pages have disappeared. And the small stick-sheets inserted to mark select pages have turned yellow. Yes, revisiting Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, over these many years, has greatly fatigued this cherished manuscript. But it has and still does serve me well. For it has enabled me to understand and appreciate Aristotle’s truisms. Moreover, it has defined happiness as my purpose in life, made me aware that practicing the Aristotelian virtues

compels a state of happiness, and made clear that it is my responsibility to exercise my free will wisely and act as I ought.

## Exploration

Having accomplished *Nicomachean Ethics*, I set about exploring the reality of my Aristotelian findings. My objective was to find out whether or not others shared my understanding and appreciation for Aristotle's major truisms: Man's<sup>1</sup> Purpose in Life, The Pursuit of Happiness, Virtues, and Free Will. To accomplish this end, I surveyed a select circle of students, colleagues, and friends. Each participant was asked a series of questions. The first question: What is your purpose in life? Their answers were traditional: my purpose in life is to graduate from college; be free of debt; be able to buy a new car; own a nice home; have a successful career; travel around the world; become a millionaire; marry and a raise a family; and live a long, healthy, secure and peaceful life...

These are interesting goals, but they are not a purpose. A purpose is an *end* in itself, whereas, goals are only a *means* to an end. Goals are transient, short term achievements that bring about a passing or fading state of fulfillment. For example, supposing one of your goals in life was to own a nice home and that you were fortunate enough to achieve that goal. Having fulfilled that goal is noteworthy. However, now you no longer have that goal to pursue and, therefore, you no longer have a purpose in life. This example implies that a goal should not be considered an infinite purpose in life, because goals are not everlasting. Aristotle speaks to this point as he reasons that a purpose in life must be an *end* in itself – a cognitive state that is endlessly pursuable – so that you may strive for it every day of your life and into eternity. In view of the recorded answers to the first question of my survey, it would seem that the surveyed participants mistook a goal for a purpose. This suggests they had little awareness of Aristotle's manifestation of a purpose in life.

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<sup>1</sup> It can be assumed that the term man, throughout this test, includes all human beings.

The next question: How do you pursue happiness? In general, the participant's answers to this question was that they tried to accomplish their personalized goals. Their answers implied that they associated the pursuit of happiness with goals, rather than an ultimate purpose.

The next questions: What is the nature of virtues? Can you recall your acts of virtuous conduct? Are you able to describe your emotional feelings after performing a virtuous act? The answers to these questions revealed the following: First, the participants appeared to be unfamiliar with the disposition of virtues. Second, they seem to have taken for granted their accumulative acts of virtuous conduct. Third, apparently they had given little thought to the emotional fulfillment that ensues subsequent to performing a virtuous act.

The final questions: What is your interpretation of Free Will? Do you accept responsibility for the consequences that accompany this endowment? The answers to these questions revealed that the participants evidenced little appreciation for the fact that they were endowed with a Free Will, and that they were somewhat vague regarding the responsibility that accompanies this endowment.

The result of this survey suggests that my select circle of associates did not seem to share my understanding and appreciation for Aristotle's truisms: Man's Purpose in Life, The Pursuit of Happiness, Virtues, and Free Will. That the surveyed participants did not share my Aristotelian findings raises some specific concerns. Why were they so misdirected regarding their purpose in life? Why were the participants so unaware of the nature of virtues? Why had they given such little thought to their untold number of virtuous acts? Why were they so unmindful of the emotional fulfillment that prevails subsequent to performing a virtuous act? And, finally, why did they not understand and appreciate the empowerment, responsibility, and consequence of being endowed with a "Free Will"?

The answer to the above questions of concern would seem to be that the participants surveyed did not have the inclination to read Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. This is understandable, because anyone who has attempted to read this philosophical masterpiece – except for a confinement of disciplined philosophers – soon find out that interpreting Aristotle's writing is painstakingly difficult and a daunting task. This is because the evolved translation of *Nicomachean Ethics* can be traced to the resurrected accumulation of Aristotle's diffuse "lecture notes", that were recorded between 384 and 325 B.C., and the sentences in these notes are telegraphic. That is to say, the formation of his sentences, are not orderly, his phrases lack transitional coherence, his clauses are excessive and disconnected, and his flow of words are interruptive.

In summary, the diffuse translations of Aristotle's confusing lecture notes make for laborious reading. Consequently, it seems reasonable to infer that the impacting philosophical findings that I was able to glean over these many years of struggling through *Nicomachean Ethics* were probably not attempted by the select circle of surveyed participants. Now, if that sample of surveyed participants can be accepted to represent a similar larger population, this would suggest that many others may also not have had the desire to labor through Aristotle's difficult-to-read treatise on ethics. Therefore, it would appear that a certain percentage of our populace may not have had a realistic opportunity to develop an appreciation for Aristotle's truisms. If, then, the generalization – that there is an apparent lack of exposure to Aristotle's art of investigating the truth and applying it to every day living – is valid, it would seem there is a need to share my Aristotelian findings with others. To fulfill this need, I have undertaken the task of presenting Aristotle's truisms in more intelligible prose. Hopefully my, treatise – Aristotle's Truisms: Man's Purpose in Life, the Pursuit of Happiness, Virtues, and Free Will, will present Aristotle's truisms in a more understandable format. However, it must be noted that, because of its

philosophical nature, you should not expect to read this manuscript over a weekend as you would a novel, because any interpretation of Aristotelian ethics must be approached deliberately, if you expect to appreciate his insightful reasoning and practical wisdom for living the good life. With that consideration in mind, if you are ready to sift through an un-clouding presentation of Aristotle's introspective and revealing truisms, you will have a better understanding and appreciation for consummating a state of happiness.

### **Chapter Summary**

My introduction to Aristotle has been presented. The exploration of the shared reality of my Aristotelian findings revealed little understanding and appreciation for Aristotle's truisms. This generalization explains the reason for writing this treatise. The next three chapters will be devoted to presenting an analysis of Aristotle's truisms: Man's Purpose in Life, The Pursuit of Happiness, Virtues and Free Will.

## Chapter II

### Aristotle's First Major Truisms

The purpose of this chapter is to debut Aristotle's first two major truisms: Man's Purpose in Life and The Pursuit of Happiness. The first of these major truisms – Man's purpose in life – brings about the question: Is there a need for man to identify a purpose in life? The answer to this question is clear. Man needs a purpose in life to give meaningfulness to his daily being. He needs one to provide direction for his daily acts of conduct. He needs one to determine how he ought to act and how he ought not to act. And finally, man needs a purpose in life to realize the good life.

Throughout history, man has searched for a meaningful purpose in life. And many philosophical writings have proposed varying answers to this provocative question. However, it seems that a universally agreed upon purpose for life, for all mankind, has not materialized. This is difficult to accept, in view of that fact that Aristotle's insightfully reasoned first major truism – that man's purpose in life is to consummate a state of *happiness*, is so convincing. The presentation that follows will give evidence to support the proposition that Happiness, as defined by Aristotle, meets the universal criterion to serve as a purpose in life for everyone.

### Man's Purpose in Life

Aristotle proposes that man's purpose in life must be *Universal*, so that it can be acceptable to all people. This means that it must be credulous to all cultures, denominations, and races. And that it must have no philosophical conflicts with any devotional convictions. He also posits that man's purpose in life must be *intellectually infinite*. That is to say, it must be a subjective state of mind that is everlasting. It must have a self-conscious potential that is endless. It must be a cognitive condition, feeling, or emotion that is

omnipresent. It must be that part of your soul<sup>2</sup> that is eternal. Moreover, you must be able to pursue your purpose in life every day of your life and into eternity.

Therefore, your purpose in life cannot be some select, transient goal such as to graduate from high school, earn a college degree, be free of debt, marry and have children, pay-off a home-mortgage, or become a millionaire. For although these may be noble objectives for some people, others may not share the same desire to seek these specific goals. Consequently, select transient goals do not meet the criteria of *Universality*.

Moreover, select transient goals do not meet the criteria of being intellectually infinite. Because transient goals are short-lived achievements that only bring about a passing or fading state of fulfillment. For example, a goal of completing a college degree cannot be considered an ultimate purpose in life; because after you graduate, you would have no subsequent purpose in life. Therefore, it seems clear, that achieving personal temporary goals cannot serve as man's purpose in life.

In regard to identifying a relevant purpose in life, Aristotle proposes *Happiness* to be man's purpose in life. He proclaims that happiness meets the criteria of *Universality*, because no one would object to being happy. Moreover, Aristotle proclaims that happiness also meets the criteria of *intellectual infinitiveness*; because happiness is surely an abstract state that can be strived for everlastingly and is truly an enduring end that prevails throughout life and transcends into eternity. Finally, Aristotle states that happiness must be what ever man seeks – for no man wants to be unhappy. In summary, Aristotle's convincing arguments validate his first major truisms – than man's purpose in life is to consummate a state of Happiness.

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<sup>2</sup> As defined herein, the soul may be considered that part of the intellect that pertains to moral decision making.

## The Pursuit of Happiness

If one wishes to pursue happiness, how do you proceed? The answer to the first fraction of this question is clear. There are no ifs in the pursuit of happiness. One “ought” to pursue happiness for your own will-being.

The second fraction of the question, how to proceed in the quest for happiness, is also clear. The pursuit of happiness involves fulfilling the following needs:

- Man’s physiological needs – food, water, sleep, clothing and shelter.
- Man’s intellectual needs – knowledge, understanding, wisdom and survival.
- Man’s anti-morbidity needs – healthy nutrition, optimal exercise, and following best health practices.
- Man’s emotional needs – security, love, friendship, belonging and hope
- Man’s ethical needs – practicing good acts of conduct and disdaining flawed acts of conduct.

The reason to fulfill one’s intellectual, anti-morbidity, and emotional needs in your pursuit of happiness is self-evident-survival. You need to sustain life and maintain a healthy body if you expect to be happy.

Fulfilling one’s ethical needs in the pursuit of happiness involves the conscious practice of deliberating and choosing to perform good acts of conduct as opposed to flawed acts of conduct.

Select situations give evidence to support Aristotle’s proposition that performing a good act of conduct lead to a state of happiness. For example, if you save a child from drowning, will that make you happy? If you prepare diligently and pass a difficult exam, will that make you happy? If you help a friend in need, will that make happy? Unless you can philosophically deny that performing such virtuous acts lead to anything but happiness, it would seem that you have to support the proposition that performing a good act of conduct will compel a state of happiness.

The following situations give evidence to support Aristotle's proposition that performing a flawed act of conduct, will that lead to a state of unhappiness? For example, if you receive a DUI citation, will that make you unhappy? If you do not prepare adequately and fail to pass a performance examination, will that make you unhappy? If your significant other finds out that you have been unfaithful, and leaves you, will that make you unhappy? Again, unless you can philosophically deny that performing such flawed acts leads to anything but unhappiness, it would seem that you have to accept the proposition that performing flawed acts of conduct lead to unhappiness.

Your pursuit of happiness and your responsibility for selecting good as opposed to flawed acts of conduct are based on human judgment. Unfortunately, human judgment is not infallible. Because of this fallibility, you need to make sure your chosen acts of conduct are truly good and not unknowingly bad. To avoid this dilemma, you need to exercise your practical wisdom. This means that you must try to determine, as precisely as you can, whether or not your choice of conduct will lead to happiness. In this regard, the more diligently you weigh your anticipated acts of conduct, the more likely your acts will lead to happiness. On the contrary, if you are cavalier and feel indifferent about spending the time and energy needed to make a wise decision regarding any anticipated act of conduct, you will have to accept the consequences of your acts if they lead to a state of unhappiness. Regarding this decision, you may choose to "flow with the tide" and take your chances on the outcome of your chosen act of conduct. But, then, you will be guilty of the vice of *irresponsibility* and must accept the consequence. For example, suppose you reason that you can afford to purchase a new car. So you arrange to finance the car through a dealer and sign the contract. The new car makes you happy. However, since you had failed to cautiously read the contract, you find that your finance interest rate is progressive and your average interest rate is above normal. Now you are unhappy. In reflection, it is easy to recognize that by failing to have carefully reviewed

your contract, you acted unwisely, and must accept the consequences of your unhappiness.

Returning to the question of performing good acts of conduct leading to a state of happiness, it is significant to recognize that good acts of conduct are not limited to the few situations cited previously. On the contrary, it's important that you realize the voluminous number of good acts of conduct that you can perform, on a daily basis that, lead to happiness. You need to be aware of these situations, so you can take advantage of your potential for enjoying as many states of happiness that you can experience throughout your day. To help you realize your potential for these states of happiness, you will find below just a few more example of good acts of conduct that will compel a state of happiness:

1. If you floss your teeth regularly, you will prevent the onset of periodontal disease, preserve healthy gums, prevent the loss of your natural teeth, and avoid the premature need for dentures. This will make you happy.
2. If you subscribe to an effective nutrition program, you will avoid the premature onset of morbidly, coronary artery disease, diabetes, cancer, low self-image, and low levels of productive energies. This will make you happy.
3. If you practice the acts of friendliness, compassion, kindness, and thoughtfulness, you will have many friends. This will make you happy.
4. If you practice acts of honesty, fairness, and integrity, it will help you become successful in your professional life. This will make you happy.
5. If you adhere to an effective exercise program, you will stress your cardiovascular and neuromuscular systems and prevent premature aging. This will make you happy.
6. If you follow the rules of the road and drive defensively, you will lessen your chance of injury. This will make you happy.
7. If you live within your financial means, spend your money wisely, and avoid serious debt. This will make you happy.
8. If you avoid litter-bugging, you will be proud of fulfilling you civic responsibility. This will make you happy.
9. If you avoid gossiping, deceptiveness, and revenge, you will avoid hurting other people. This will make you happy.
10. If you follow societal laws, you will avoid unnecessary litigation and problematic legal fees. This will make you happy.

11. If you are courteous driver, you will avoid road rage confrontations. This will make you happy.
12. If you thank someone for a courteous act, you will make them happy. This will make you happy.
13. If you complement someone on their good acts of conduct, you will make them happy. This will make you happy.
14. If you had a productive day and sense a feeling of accomplishment. This will make you happy.

The above examples of finding happiness were presented to encourage you to reflect on all the good acts of conduct that you have performed throughout the day. In this regard, a fulfilling habit to develop is -- at the end of your day -- to review all the good acts you have performed throughout your day. You will realize how many good acts that you have actually produced and the states of happiness that you are entitled to enjoy.

The presence of *Happiness* as a meaningful *Purpose in Life* will be to enable you to use your life's purpose to give meaning to your daily being. Contrarily, non-presence of a purpose in life will leave you without a design for your daily existence. Without design, you will have no goals for your daily acts of conduct. Without conduct goals, you will have no means to evaluate your conduct choices. And without an evaluation process, you will be unable to reflect on the results of your flawed acts of conduct or enjoy the benefits produced from your good acts of conduct. In summary, you need a purpose in life to process your good acts of conduct, realize their reinforcing nature to habituate a virtuous character, and consummate a permanent state of happiness.

### **Happiness Accompli**

An example of accomplished happiness (happiness accompli) can best be illustrated by reflecting on a classic motion picture. Years ago, there was a World War II classic movie starring Sir Alec Guinness and the powerful English actor Jack Hawkins. Guinness played a part of a priest who was the spirited leader of a small French Town invaded by Germany. Hawkins

played the part of a German interrogator whose role was to probe the priest's past, penetrate his spiritual frailty, and diabolically coerce him into confession the moral despair he feared most. The interrogators strategy was to break the priest's will and brainwash him into convincing the town's people not to resist the German intruders. The movie was a psychological drama that took place in a small interrogation room. It matched the psycho-dramatic wills of two powerful minds, each trying to break the will of the other. After a series of long, brilliant, ego-ideal exchanges, Guinness seemingly breaks down and admits that his mother had been a prostitute. Hawkins proclaims victory. However, the plot suddenly changes. It isn't that Guinness is ashamed to reveal that his mother was a prostitute. Rather he was afraid that the motive behind his courage to resist Hawkins' inquisition was for the glory he would receive from his parishioners subsequent to his release. For that he would be vain and guilty of a cardinal vice, according to Aristotle's principles of ethics. Rather, he hoped that he resisted the invader's grilling because it was the virtuous thing to do. And if none of his followers recognized his courageous resistance, it would be all right; because he knew he had acted as honorable man, and consequently would experienced a state of happiness.

In regards to the vain-glory dilemma, you need to remember that if you have overt concerns about recognition, self-notoriety, or excessive praise, you will be disappointed if any expected adulations are not forthcoming. However, if you are modest and perform to fulfill your intrinsic desires rather than to receive extrinsic awards and recognition, you will never be disappointed, because your internal needs will be fulfilled.

## **Chapter Summary**

The first of Aristotle's major truisms – Man's Purpose in Life and his Pursuit of Happiness have been presented and validated. Happiness has been identified as a purpose in life that is Universal and Intellectually Infinite. The performance of good acts of conduct has been identified as means to pursue a state of happiness. And select acts of good conduct that lead to happiness have been identified to make you more mindful of the endless number of good acts of conduct that you actually perform each day and to enjoy the states of happiness that your virtuous acts compel. Finally, a psychological drama was presented to give evidence of one's frailties and the state of happiness one receives when acting honorably. The next chapter will present a proposed matrix of present day virtues.

## Chapter III

### Aristotle's Third Major Truism

Aristotle's third major truism introduces the prophetic<sup>3</sup> conceptualization of his introspective cataloguing of his uncompromising construct of *Golden Mean Virtues* and his classification of *Intellectual Virtues*. His system of golden mean virtues includes the following moral virtues<sup>4</sup>: courage, temperance, honor, justice, magnificence, liberality, good temperance, friendliness and goodness. His system of intellectual virtues includes the following: *Practical Wisdom* – knowledge of how to behave as one ought; and *Insightful reasoning, knowledge* of the principals from which practical wisdom proceeds. That Aristotle's moral and intellectual virtues are *truisms* is revealed by the fact that they meet the criteria of *certitude* – true beyond all doubt; *self-evidentcy* – the opposite of which is not possible; and *falseifiability* – it cannot be falsified by rational argument. In summary, Aristotle's proposed virtues, at time of conception as well as at the present time, are hard to deny. The caveat – at the present time – is necessary, because the future may produce contradictory evidence. Notwithstanding, unless you can reason otherwise, Aristotle's virtues can be considered truisms.

### Proposed System of Present – Day Virtues

The relevancy of Aristotle's system of virtues goes without saying. However, it's important to recognize, that over the years, many other virtues have evolved. Therefore, there seemed to be a need to structure a more contemporary system of virtues which incorporates the virtues that more accumulatively reflect the ethical values echoed by contemporary societal norms. So in extreme reverence to the master this author has structured a Proposed System of Present-Day Virtues that is more inclusive than the

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<sup>3</sup> As defined herein, *prophetic* refers to an inspired revelation.

<sup>4</sup> As defined herein, *moral virtues* pertain to the principles of right conduct.

system conceptualized by Aristotle more than 23 centuries ago. Recognizing the rooted value of Aristotle's illuminating cataloguing of virtues, this author wisely and reverently elected to cling to Aristotle's pragmatic system of classifying virtues. Therefore, the comprehensive matrix of virtues about to be presented will include Aristotle's originally conceived virtues – as well as the evolved virtues that have become cultural customs over the past 2,300 years. Notwithstanding, this treatise makes no claim that the proposed virtues herein are all-inclusive or unchallengeable. Rather, it simply proposes a more inclusive sample of virtues than the historical system of virtues introduced by Aristotle.

Each of the virtues identified in this chapter symbolizes moral excellence, goodness, and righteousness – and embodies beneficent acts of human conduct. These virtues are governed by “Free Will” and are autonomous of any authoritative entity that attempts to regulate ethical conduct. Nevertheless, they do comply with legally binding jurisdictions.

Finally, it should be noted that these virtues are philosophical in nature and are not in conflict with the “Divine Virtues.” Rather, they are meant to complement them – because both are profoundly effective compelling moral conduct. However, it must also be noted, that the “Divine Virtues” are beyond the scope of this treatise and that the system of present-day-virtues proposed herein, will be limited to the philosophical virtues that were empirically derived from existing cultural norms selected by insightful reasoning.

The proposed systems of present-day-virtues were catalogued according to the same introspective categories conceptualized by Aristotle. The first of these categories to be presented will be Aristotle's famed Golden Mean Virtues (Table I). And as mentioned previously, the virtues in this category have been broadened considerably so as to incorporate those virtues that have evolved over the past 23 centuries. Table I also includes

the respective *Vices of Extreme* for each of the proposed golden mean virtues. Aristotle proposes that these respective vices of extreme are immoral acts of conduct that refer to a particular fault, defect, or depravity. The vices of extreme include the *Vice of Excess*- a vice categorized by Aristotle that falls to the extreme of a golden mean virtue; and the *Vice of Deficit* – a vice categorized by Aristotle that falls to the other extreme of that golden virtue. The proposed golden-mean virtues and their respective vices of extreme presented in Table 1, are founded on the *ethos* of our society which includes the fundamental spirit of our culture, the dominant assumptions of our people, the character deposition of our state, and the underlying sentiments that establish the beliefs, customs, and practices of our commonwealth.

**Table 1**  
**Proposed Present-Day Golden Mean Virtues**  
**And their Respective Vices of Extreme**

<b>Vices of Extreme Excess</b>	<b>Golden Mean Virtues</b>	<b>Vices of Extreme Deficit</b>
Foolhardiness	Courage	Cowardice
Vaingloriousness	Praiseworthiness	Ignoble
Rashness	Prudence	Ignorance
Self-Indulgence	Temperance	Self-Denial
Hot-Tempered	Temper-Management	Non-Responsive
Squandering	Wealth-Moderation	Miserliness
Fawningness	Friendliness	Unfriendliness
Cockiness	Confidence	Timidness
False-Light	Hope	Hopelessness
Overuse Syndrome	Optimal Exercise	Hypokinetic Syndrome
Buffoonish	Tastefully Humorous	Boorish
Pertinacity	Perseverance	Yielding

**Table 2**

**Proposed Present-Day Virtues - With a Respective Contra-Vice**

In this category of virtues, Aristotle proposes that some virtues have only one extreme, namely, a contra-vice. A contra-vice is a vice that is a direct opposite of its respective virtue. So, unlike the golden mean virtues, the virtues in this table will be presented with only one extreme, a contra-vice.

<b>Virtue</b>	<b>Contra - Vice</b>
Beneficence	Badness
Caring	Uncaring
Citizenship (Good)	Citizenship (Bad)
Civility	Rudeness
Compassion	Non-Compassion
Cooperativeness	Uncooperativeness
Fairness	Unfairness
Honest	Dishonest
Integrity	Unsound
Just	Unjust
Loyal	Disloyal
Passionate	Non-Passionate
Patience	Impatience
Punctuality	Lateness
Respectfulness	Disrespectfulness
Responsibility	Irresponsibility
Self-Image (High)	Self-Image (Low)
Thoughtfulness	Unthoughtfulness
Trustworthiness	Distrustfulness
Truthfulness	Deceitfulness
Tolerance	Intolerant

**Table 3**  
**Proposed Present-Day**  
**Vices without Virtue**

In Aristotle's final classification, you will find a list of vices that are bad in themselves; they have no respective class of virtues. It is not possible to be right with these vices. You must always be wrong.

Adultery

Barbarianism

Cheating

Envy

Incontinence

Infidelity

Jealousy

Malingering

Murder

Passing Moral Judgment

Revenge

Shamelessness

Spite

Thievery

### ***Carrer Inculcating Virtue***

In 1941, at the age of 18, I enlisted in the US Navy. After 24 months of sea duty in the European theater of WWII, I realized I could best serve my country as an officer. When I applied for Officer Training School (OTS), the commanding officer informed me that my service aptitude test scores were high, but that a high school diploma – which I had never acquired – was required. Learning of this situation, my mother scheduled a visit to see the principle of my high school, Mr. Olice P. Winters. As my mother started to explain the situation, he said just a minute Mrs. Rohter; I need to talk to my secretary. After a few minutes, she came in his office and handed him a folder. He opened it and disposed his signature. Unhesitatingly, he said: “Here Mrs. Rohter is your son’s diploma – I remember him well. He was a good student and an outstanding athlete.” Mr. Winters was a grand old educator. He never suggested that I take any make-up course work or qualifying exams. He just unswervingly signed my diploma. His doubtless act of kindness made it possible for me to be accepted into OTS, which gave impetus to my post-war graduate work and completion of a terminal degree. Mr. Winter’s kindness was an act of virtue that shaped my professional career and fashioned my philosophy of teaching. For you see, I have practiced the virtue of kindness to my students throughout my academic life. This virtue has made me an effective teacher – and for that, I’ll always be grateful to Mr. Olice P. Winter, Principal of Lake View High School, Chicago, IL.

### **Chapter Summary**

Tables 1, 2 and 3 presented a system of proposed virtues and respective vices of extreme that have, humbly, been expanded to include select virtues and vices more inclusive of the contemporary norms of virtuous conduct established by our current culture. And, finally, a career inculcating virtues of kindness was storied. The next chapter will present the last of Aristotle’s Truism: Free Will

# Chapter IV

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## Aristotle's Fourth Major Truism

Free will refers to the intellectual faculty that gives you the freedom to choose between rightful and wrongful behavior. Free Will provides you the freedom to make moral-conduct decisions based on insightful reasoning. And finally, Free Will affords you the prerogative to practice the moral virtues that habituate a virtuous character and bring about a state of happiness.

Free Will is a universally endowed right that everyone possesses. It is an empowered faculty that cannot be transferred. It is an inalienable right that is free from any sumptuary <sup>5</sup> legislature that attempts to regulate the freedom you have in making moral conduct choices.

Notwithstanding, the doctrine of Free Will carries with it the expectation of self-responsibility. That is to say, since, your endowed Free Will gives you the inherent freedom to act as you wish – then it follows that you inherit the self-responsibility to act as you ought. This means that you must accept absolute responsibility for your acts of conduct, from a moral point of view as well as from a legal perspective. This means that, if you perform an immoral act of conduct, you will suffer the consequences of experiencing a state of unhappiness. And if you perform an unlawful act of conduct, you will suffer the consequences of adjudication. That self-responsibility is a moral and legal obligation for all is made clear by the fact that no known societal, denominative, or legislative entity assumes responsibility for man's immoral or unlawful acts of conduct.

Before the Free Will doctrine presented above can be universally accepted as a truism, any theory that questions man's freedom to act as he wishes must be explored. In this regard, there does exist a select cohort of "determinists" who believe that one's acts of conduct are not supposed by

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<sup>5</sup> Pertaining to legislative statutes that attempt to regulate personal conduct or moral behavior

the doctrine of Free Will. Rather, they theorize that one's acts of conduct happen by an "unpredictable chance event," based on a person's background of experiences. Notwithstanding, the determinists, theory seems to be the only ascertained position that offers an alternative to the Doctrine of Free Will. Therefore, if the determinist's theory can be invalidated, the universality of the Doctrine of Free Will can be accepted as a truism.

To dispel the determinist's belief that man's acts of conduct are not governed by his Free Will, but are merely chance happenings, Mortimer Alder – in his book: *The Ten Philosophical Mistakes* – points out that the determinist's "unpredictable chance event" theory is based on the principles set-forth within the "physical science domain." And, that the determinist's make the mistake of assuming that the principles set forth in their theory also apply to one's Free Will. This assumption, however, is invalid, because man's *Will* is an immaterial intellectual faculty and, therefore, rests within the philosophical, "immaterial domain." And since the principles of this domain reside outside the scope of the "physical science domain", and therefore, the chance event principles set-forth in the determinist's theory cannot be applied to the Doctrine of Free Will.

Mortimer Adler gives further evidence to dispel the determinist's theory that man's act of conduct happens by chance rather than by virtue of man's endowed freedom to act as he wishes. He says that man must be endowed with a Free Will, because this inherent freedom is indispensable to man's assumed responsibility to act as he ought. For example, how could anyone be held responsible for an act of conduct, he could not have chosen to perform? Why should an individual be praised or blamed, rewarded or punished for acts not freely chosen? How can the punishment for a criminal act be retributively just, if the perpetrator did not have a free will and the inherent responsibility to act within the law?

In summary, the determinists' belief that one's acts of conduct occur by chance is flawed, because it was based on a faulty major premise: The assumption that the laws of the "physical science domain" also apply to the principles set-forth within a different domain, namely the philosophical, "immaterial domain" is involved.

In conclusion, with the determinists' beliefs dispelled and the self-evidence that prevails within the Doctrine of Free Will, it seems reasonable to deduce that man is endowed with a Free Will and inherits the responsibility to act as he ought morally as well as lawfully.

### **Free Will- Reflection**

In 1982, I entered the Hawaiian International Ironman Triathlon (2.4 mile swim, 112 mile bike, and a 26.2 mile run). The open water swim in the Pacific Ocean was trying. The water temperature was 68° F. It was so cold, I developed hypothermia. After three (3) hours in the water, I finally made it to shore – completely disoriented. As I was helped out of the water, the swim-event doctor observed my condition and informed me that I was medically disqualified.

Discouraged I sat in the transition bay, bathing in the rays of the warm sun. After a few minutes, my hypothermia seemed to subside, so I asked the swim physician to check me out. He tested my condition and said that if I could find my bike, mount it, and start peddling in full control, he would let me go on.

I found my bike, put on my helmet, swung my leg over the seat, secured my cleated shoes in the pedal brackets and started to cycle unsteadily. The spectators saw my situation and started to cheer me on. My adrenal glands responded, I gained control of the bike, the doctor waived me on, and I was off for the 112-mile cycle leg. Biking was my strongest event, and soon I was spinning with confidence. As I contemplated my cycle strategies, I remembered that the swim official had notified me that four triathletes in my age-group were unable to complete the 2.4-mile swim. I

knew that there were only ten athletes in my age-group (55-59 years). That left six competitors vying for the plaques awarded for the first five finishers. So I knew there was only one triathlete I had to beat to receive one of those coveted awards.

As I pedaled my bike, I tried to identify this unknown sixth man. I looked for him for the 56 miles out to the cycle turn around, but to no avail. On the way back, about 30 miles into the cycle return route, I stopped at an aid station to rehydrate. And there he was: a little Japanese man. I thought he must be the sixth man and tried to confirm my suspicions. But he didn't speak English. Convinced I was right, I stayed on his rear wheel all the way to the cycle-run transition area.

In the transition room, some 60 triathletes were trying to decide if they were going to attempt the marathon run leg. Most were sitting, trying to resolve their fatigue, muscle-joint pain, and mental anguish – the little Japanese man was doing the same. I told myself, *if he doesn't want it, I'm ready to try*. I had to walk up the hill at the start of the run. However, after reaching level ground, my running muscles started to receive blood flow that was being redistributed from my cycle muscles. Soon, I reached my second wind and started running. I ran for 16 miles before leg pains set in. At the 17<sup>th</sup> mile aid station, I reached for a cup of water, and coming up behind me was the little Japanese man. I was moving rather slowly and expected my opponent to pass me. But as I entered the 18<sup>th</sup> mile water aid station, he was still behind me.

It was now about midnight. I had been performing for about 16 ½ hours. My leg muscles were cramped, my stomach was distressed, my involuntary nervous system broke down, and I became incontinent. As I contemplated my physiological state, it suddenly came to me: the little Japanese man did not have the will to pass me; and that if I could generate a strengthening mental set, I would prevail. To generate this needed mental-state, I reflected on December 7, 1942, the day the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. I visualized the little Japanese man as the enemy and revisited the

bitter details of World War II. The more I fantasized, the more adrenaline I secreted, and the more I was able to evoke periodic bouts of sprint-runs.

I kept picturing the innocent little Japanese man as the enemy in order to release the “fight or flight” hormones that would enable me to continue the sprint intervals for the next seven miles. To accomplish this end, I would sprint an interval of 100 yards and shout: “That’s for Pearl Harbor.” Another 100 yards and shout – “that’s for Iwo Jima.” And each time I sprinted a 100 yard interval, I would revisit, one of the World War II battle fronts and shout: “that’s for Wake Island”, “that’s for the Corregidor,” “that’s for the battle of Mid-Way,” etc. However, eventually my physiological fatigue overpowered by psychological will and I had to walk.

Tanya, the wife of Mort Rosenblum, (a colleague who accompanied us to Hawaii), walked with me for the last mile of the run. As we turned the corner, which was only a  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile from the finish line, she alerted me that a young couple was going to pass me. I said, “Don’t worry about them, but if you see a little Japanese man coming up on me, let me know –because I can still turn on a sprint for that last  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile.”

I finished the 1982 Hawaiian Ironman in 18:07:45. But, because it was so dark and because I was in such a delusionary mental state during the last six miles of the running leg of triathlon, I was never positive that I had actually bested the little Japanese man. So the next night at the Ironman Banquet, I waited anxiously as they announced the age-group winners. When I was recognized as the 5<sup>th</sup> place finisher, in my age group, it felt good to be ranked as the 5<sup>th</sup> best cardiovascular-fit man, between 55-59 years, in the world.

Afterwards, the little Japanese man, who I had psychologically abused, came over to my table, gave me a Japanese flag headband, took my picture, and put his arms around me in friendship. I was ashamed that I had vented my fantasies on this kind, gentle man. I have tried to rationalize the mental-set ergogenic strategies I used to endure my pain and finish this noble triathlon, but I have serious reservations about the ethics behind them. For if I used my World War II reflections to take home a 5<sup>th</sup> place finisher plaque –

I was vain and vanity is a major Aristotelian vice. But if I used the nostalgic reflections to give me the physiological and psychological strength to endure the last 6 miles of that grueling event, my strategies were virtuous and I performed with moral integrity. I sincerely hope that I used my endowed Free Will wisely and that my conduct, under the circumstances, was honorable and not an act of vanity.

### **Chapter Summary**

The Doctrine of Free Will has been presented. The determinist's theory that questions man's freedom to act as he wishes has been invalidated. And the reflections on a chosen act of conduct and its moral interpretation have been put to choice. The next chapter will analyze the Virtue of Practical Wisdom.

# Chapter V

## Practical Wisdom

Practical wisdom is an *intellectual virtue*. Wisdom refers to knowledge, understanding, learning, experience, and soundness of judgment in matters relating to life and acts of human conduct. Practical Wisdom refers to one's intellectual capacity to reason, deliberate, and differentiate between right and wrong decisions regarding acts of human conduct.

Practical Wisdom, like Free Will, is a function of one's intellect. However, Practical Wisdom – unlike one's Free Will – is not a natural endowment. Rather, it is an intellectual faculty that must be acquired by practice. That is to say, each intellectual component of Practical Wisdom – knowledge, logical reasoning, and making good judgments – must be perfected. To reach this virtuous perfection, you must practice each of these intellectual components until it becomes a habit. To accomplish this end, you need to become knowledgeable about Aristotle's Truisms, embellish your potential to reason and deliberate wisely, and choose how to act as you ought. Notwithstanding, you also must learn to appreciate your endowed Free Will and accept the responsibilities that accompany this omnipotent freedom. In summary, in order to perfect the virtue of Practical Wisdom, you must practice all of the intellectual faculties that nurture this virtue. You must practice these intellectual faculties until they become a habit and a permanent part of your personal character. Then! You will have *the wisdom* to perform as a person of virtue and realize a happy life. To help you better understand the nature of Practical Wisdom, you need to deliberate the situations presented below:

**Situation** – You pass a burning building as a child calls for help from a 2<sup>nd</sup> story window. You weigh the situation and choose one of the following courses of action:

**Foolhardy Conduct** (Vice of Excess)

You rush to judgment and attempt an extremely dangerous rescue without first conducting a careful study of the existing dangers. Consequently, you fail to save the child; moreover, you die in the attempt. Your choice of conduct was foolhardy and considered a vice of excess.

**Cowardly Conduct** (Vice of Deficit)

You judge the fire as being not too dangerous to make a safe rescue. However, you are afraid to trust your judgment and ignore a rescue attempt. As a consequence, the child dies in the burning building. Your misjudged fear was an act of cowardice and considered vice of deficit.

**Courageous Conduct** (Golden Mean Virtue)

You study the extent of the fire carefully and judge that rescuing the child would be dangerous. However, you are convinced that with cautionary strategies, you could save the child without endangering your own life. You rescue the child while executing the precautions for personal survival. Your choice of conduct was courageous and considered a golden mean virtue. By performing this virtue, you have strengthened your virtuous character.

To choose the morally virtuous course of action in the above situation, you will need to be aware of the golden mean virtue of courage and its respective vice of excess – *foolhardiness*, as well as its respective vice of deficit – *cowardice*. You will have to question your physiological attributes: Are you strong enough, cardiovascular fit enough, confident enough – to rescue the child without sacrificing your own life? And finally, you will have to identify an effective strategic plan that will enable you to execute a safe rescue. If you have perfected the virtue of Practical Wisdom, you will have the wisdom to perform a virtuous act – the opportunity to save a child without self-sacrifice. And if you so choose, you will have accomplished an act of courage and experienced a state of happiness.

## Pleasure

To help you perfect the virtue of Practical Wisdom, you need to understand and appreciate the nature of *pleasure*. Pleasure is a state being pleased or gratified. Pleasure is a sensuous faculty that *allures* a person to act so as to fulfill one's *natural needs*. Natural needs are innate, indispensable physiological *musts*,

essential to sustaining human life. For example, the pleasure one receives from anticipating the taste of select foods, allures you into satisfying your sense of hunger and helps fulfill your body's nutritional needs. Anticipating the pleasure of tasting a select beverage, allures one to drink a specific liquid-food and helps fulfill your rehydration needs. The pleasure of environmental comfort allures one to seek protective shelters and don appropriate clothing, and helps fulfill your survival needs. The pleasure of rest allures one into adhering to an optimal sleep schedule in order to help prevent the premature onset of fatigue.

The sense of pleasure may also be used to allure one into fulfilling an *acquired desire*. An acquired desire differs from natural needs. As previously noted, natural needs are innate, indispensable "musts", that are necessary to sustain life. Whereas, acquired desires are neither innate, nor indispensable to maintain human life. Rather, they are *wants* that are developed throughout. For example, the pleasure of knowing and understanding allures one to observe, listen, read, perceive, and study in order to become enlightened and mindful of the intellectual satisfaction desired to experience a full life. Below you will find examples to illustrate this phenomenon:

The pleasure of perceiving a thing of beauty allures one to acquire a desire for appreciating select aesthetic sensations e.g.: Sighting a butterfly, a dove, a fawn, a rose petal, a flowing brook, a majestic mountain an innocent child; or hearing a nostalgic melody, a humming bird, wind chimes, a crackling fireplace, the ocean, laughter, a waterfall ...

The pleasure of tastes allures one to acquire desire for such delicacies such as dark chocolate, a Salzburger nockerl, a cool summer beverage, a hot winter drink, a piece of home-made pie.....

The pleasure of emotional security allures one to acquire a desire for acceptance, belonging, self- worth; and compels you to practice the virtues of loyalty, caring, honesty, patience.....

The pleasure one receives from preventing morbidity and mortality allures one to acquire a desire to adhere to an optimal exercise and nutrition lifestyle and sustain a state of "high level wellness."

And finally, the pleasure one receives for experiencing a state of happiness allures one to acquire the desire to practice the moral and

intellectual virtues, appreciate and understand the nature of one's Free Will, and seek a virtuous character.

In summary, the purpose of Pleasure is to allure a person to act in a virtuous manner in order to fulfill a natural need or acquire desire. However, it must be noted that pleasure may also be used to lure a person to act in a flawed manner in an attempt to fulfill a natural need or acquired desire. This would involve the vices of extreme and be a moral mistake. The next chapter will discuss this issue.

## **Chapter Summary**

The intellectual virtue of Practical Wisdom has been defined. The intellectual component of this virtue has been made clear. And the nature of pleasure has been presented.

## Chapter VI

### Vice

A vice is practiced when one performs a flawed act of conduct. Such an act is considered immoral. However, if one performs a flawed act *involuntarily*, it is not considered immoral. But it is still a vice. For example: performing a flawed act involuntarily include the following: Performing a flawed act of conduct under the influence of a mind altering substance such as alcohol or a recreational drug or while in a state of emotional distress, or while you are subjected to torture. Under these circumstances, any flawed act of conduct is not considered immoral, because you acted involuntarily. However, ethically, it still must be classified as a vice.

And, then, there is the situation wherein one performs a flawed act of conduct unknowingly. Take for example the child who is too young to have perfected the intellectual virtues of *practical wisdom* and *intuitive reasoning*. If a child of that age performs a flawed act of conduct, it is not considered immoral, because of the child's ethical immaturity. But it is still considered a vice, because of the reasons stated above. Or consider the situation wherein one may have reached adulthood without having been exposed to the *moral reasoning*/experiences needed to deliberate wisely. Under these circumstances, one may perform a flawed act of conduct unknowingly. Against, such an act would not be considered immoral. However, it would still be classified as a vice.

And finally, there is the situation wherein one is guilty of a moral transgression. Moral transgressions are bad acts of conduct that are rationalized as being morally acceptable. For example, a student may rationalize that cheating on an exam is morally acceptable, because he or she didn't have time to study, and a low grade would affect his or her grade point average. In effect, however, the student has actually placed self-

benefit or some personal gratification over morality. The problem with moral transgressions is that you must, eventually, accept the consequences of imprudently choosing a flawed course of action. For example, the consequences of cheating on an exam includes the anxiety of being caught, and, if you are caught, the reality of the disciplinary action that you may be subjected to by the presiding authorities. A moral transgressions lead to unpleasant consequences, and are counter productive to the development of a virtuous character.

In summary, under certain circumstances, choosing to act in a flawed manner involuntarily, unknowingly, or because of a moral transgression is not immoral. However, performing a flawed act under any of these conditions is still considered a vice and results in consequence that lead to a state of unhappiness. This is why it is so important to avoid moral decisions made under the influence of mind altering drugs, emotional distress, coercion, or torture (if possible), moral transgressions, and in situations where in moral reasoning has not yet been perfected.

## Vices of Extreme

Aristotle's vices of extreme came about when he conceptualized his doctrine of Golden Mean Virtues. For in order to present his virtues as a golden mean, he had to formulate the respective vices of extreme for each of his identified virtues. For example, when he identified *courage* as a golden mean virtue, he also had to recognize its corresponding vices of extreme: *fool-heartiness*, the vice of excess and *cowardice* – the vice of deficit. Formulating this vice-virtue-vice framing was needed in order to present the virtue of courage as a mean course of action that rested between two extreme flawed courses of action. Aristotle's innovative virtue-vice construct introduced a meaningful ethical model, whereby one could identify the virtuous acts of conduct that compel a state of happiness and the vices of extreme that compel a state of unhappiness.

When you think about the elegant formatting of Aristotle's golden mean virtues and vices of extreme doctrine, you have to marvel at his nimble creativity. Maybe that is why he is considered one of our "greatest thinkers." Below you will find how Aristotle's practical doctrine of classifying virtues and vices may be used to help you choose a pathway of virtue and avoid the onset of moral weakness.

**Situation:**

You attend a school reunion.

**Buffoonish Conduct** (Vice of Excess)

In attempt to be humorous, you jokingly make fun of one of your classmates' excess weight and loss of hair. Your degrading remarks were embarrassing. You also told an off-color, anti-minority joke that was not appreciated by your classmates. Your conduct was buffoonish and you committed the vice of excess.

**Boorish Conduct** (Vice of Deficit)

Because you are insecure about your sense of humor, you were afraid to make appropriate, fun-loving comments to your classmates. You also found it difficult to join the laughter that is typical of class reunions. Your conduct was boorish and you committed the vice of deficit.

**Tastefully Humorous** (Golden Mean Virtue)

You enjoyed the contagious, reunion laughter and contributed by offering humorous anecdotes of your classmates' school years behavior. You brought up funny times of your past school years and your classmates enjoyed your humorous memories. Your conduct was tastefully humorous and a golden mean virtue. You have strengthened your virtuous character.

**Situation:**

You experience chest pains and suffer a mild cardiac episode. Your cholesterol is high and your body percent fat is above normal. You initiate a risk factor reduction program.

**Overuse Conduct** (Vice of Excess)

You start an ambitious long distance running program. However, you overextended your daily runs and develop a structural overuse problem. You are forced to stop your training program. Your conduct was one of excess and considered a vice of deficit.

**Hypokinetic Conduct** (Vice of Deficit)

You continue a sedentary lifestyle, ignore your cardiac symptoms, and accumulate coronary artery disease (CAD) risk factors. Your conduct invites age-related morbidity and the premature onset of mortality. You are guilty of the vice of deficit.

### **Optimum – Kinetic Character**

You develop a sound exercise program consisting of walking and resistance training. Your start-up goals are progressive and realistic. You remain injury free, reduce your total cholesterol and body fat percent, attenuate your CAD risk factors, and increase your muscle tissue – which in turn elevates your resting metabolic rate (RMR). Your effective exercise program was a golden mean virtue and you strengthened virtuous character.

### **Situation:**

You are invited to a party:

#### **Patronizing Conduct** (Vice of Excess)

At the party, you behave in an offensive and condescending manner. You fawn over the hostess. You kowtow to her demands to help serve the food. You seek notice by over complimenting her on the decorations. You seek favor by servile demeanor. You flatter her because she is vain. Your behavior was patronizing and you committed a vice of excess.

#### **Unfriendly Conduct** (Vice of Deficit)

At the party, you find refuge in a corner chair. When people approach, you are indifferent. When they introduce themselves, you offer a cold handshake and forget their names. In a small group conversation, you fail to ask stimulating questions and are uncomfortable with their conversation; you fail to ask stimulating questions and are uncomfortable with their conversations topics. You complain about the refreshments and reluctantly participate in the party-mixer game. You are guilty of unfriendly conduct which is a vice of deficit.

#### **Friendly Conduct** (Golden Mean Virtue)

You arrive at the party on time and ask the hostess if she needs help. You volunteer to serve the refreshments and lead the party-mixer game. After the party starts, you join a small group discussing current topics and ask interesting questions to stimulate the conversation. Later you meet a special person, receive an invitation to lunch and asked to join a recreational league. You help clean up after the party and call the hostess the next day to thank her for the invitation. You practiced the golden mean virtue of friendship and strengthened your virtuous character.

These hypothetical situations illustrate how Aristotle's doctrine of golden mean virtues and vice of extreme may be used to strengthen your virtuous character.

## Pleasure

And now we return to the alluring potential of pleasure. As was shown in Chapter V, pleasure can be used to fulfill a natural need or an acquired desire. However, it is crucial to note, that pleasure may also be used to satisfy a vice of extreme. For example, the sensual pleasure of satisfying one's appetite can allure you to overeat. Overeating beyond the point of satiety is *gluttony* - a vice of overindulgence, which is the vice of excess for the virtue of *temperance*. So, although pleasure can allure you to perform a golden mean virtue, it can also lure you to perform a vice of extreme. In this regard, Aristotle states: that the pleasure that allures one towards a worthy activity is good, and the pleasure that lures one towards an unworthy activity is bad. He also states: that to use pleasure to satisfy *ones sensual appetite* – as the “only good” – is to use pleasure as *end* itself. But Aristotle makes clear that pleasure is not an end in itself; it is only a means to an end. And if you choose the life of a compulsive pleasure-seeker, you live a slavish life – one fit only for beasts.

In summary, using pleasure to allure one to satisfy a natural need or an acquired desire is fundamental. But, using pleasure as an end in itself, as the Hedonists do, leads to the sensory vices such as the beastly acts of overindulgence or gluttony.

## Vice Categories

It is interesting to note that Aristotle doesn't seem to differentiate between the vices, in any way. However, if you study the various vices, there does seem to be an apparent distinction between them. To see the interest in distinguishing between vices, allow me the liberty to propose a ranking of the vices according to degree of immorality. For example, a flawed act of conduct such as: being late for an appointment, litter-bugging, failing to

return a phone call may be classified as a vice of deficit, or indifference. A flawed act of conduct such as overindulgence or pleasure-seeking may be classified as a vice of debauchery. A flawed act of conduct such as cannibalism or murder may be classified as a vice of evilness or barbarianism. Or a flawed act of conduct such as infidelity or adultery may be classification of a vice of debasement or degradation. However, please be aware, that these classifications are merely being proposed and serve only to illustrate how vices may vary in degree of immorality. One final thought. It is important to distinguish a vice from a sin. A vice refers to a flawed habit, while a sin refers to a transgression of *divine law*.

### **Unknowning, Not Immoral**

A man and his family relocated from a tough neighborhood in Chicago to a congenial city in Florida. The father enrolled his son in the local elementary school. On the first day of school his son, was expelled for fighting. The following day, the father enrolled his son in a different elementary school. But again his son was expelled for fighting.

In desperation, the father sought help from his neighbor. The neighbor suggested that the father enroll his son in the nearby Catholic school. But the father replied: "we are not Catholics, and my son has had no religious exposure". The neighbor explained that the Catholic schools welcome all students, regardless of religious training.

So as a last resort, the father enrolled his son in Saint Francis Academy. Surprisingly, on the first day of school the son came home from school – no expulsions. The second day the son returned from school – no expulsions, and the son was doing his homework. The father was amazed and asked his son how come he made such a dramatic adjustment. The son replied: "That's a tough school Dad; the first day I was there they had some guy nailed to the door." Chagrined by his son's irreverent comment, the father visited the headmaster of Saint Francis and apologized to priest for his son's impious comment. Whereupon, the priest replied "Not to worry, your son simply committed a flawed act of conduct unknowingly. And that a seven year old child, who has had no theological orientation, who was not old enough to perfect the intellectual virtue of *practical wisdom*, and who was not mature enough to understand and appreciate the consequence of committing an undutiful act of conduct – is not considered immoral if he brings to pass a moral transgression.

Consequently, his irreverence to Jesus' Crucifixion cannot be considered a vice, because he acted unknowingly, and had not been exposed to the divinity of Jesus Christ. The priest went on to say: Let us be patient with your son; and with time and some spiritual guidance, he will have matured enough to understand and appreciate the divinity of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. So give us time, and we will be able to rectify your son's moral

transgression. And when your son has perfected the intellectual virtue of *practical wisdom*, he will realize that although committing a moral transgression may not be considered a vice, it does, eventually, compel a state of unhappiness.

The moral of this story is that the priest was a wise and effective teacher who recognized the virtue of *tolerance* and the relevancy of understanding the imperfection and unknowingness of a young child.

### **Chapter Summary**

The nature of vice was presented. Aristotle's doctrine of golden mean virtues and vices of extreme was analyzed. Situations of Aristotle's virtue-vices of extreme construct were illustrated to help direct virtuous decision-making. The significance of pleasure was identified. And a category of vices was proposed based on a degree of immorality. The next chapter will analyze Aristotle's process of habituation.

## Chapter VII

### Aristotelian Habituation

#### Introduction

*Aristotelian habituation* is a process by which one practices an intellectual function repetitiously until it becomes almost involuntary. To illustrate, if you rehearse a neuromuscular function over and over it eventually becomes a highly skilled habit. For instance, the violin student becomes a symphony virtuoso by extensive practice and competition. And the golf-school enrollee qualifies for professional status by extensive practice and competition. These are examples of neuromotor habituation that are functions of one's intellectual capacity to coordinate a neuromuscular proficiency. Similarly, there are moral reasoning functions within one's intellect that, if practiced repetitiously, can become moral habits. For example, if you practice the moral virtue of *honesty* repeatedly, you habituate this virtue, and honesty becomes a permanent part of your personality or moral character. And if you practice the virtue of *perseverance*, the ability to persevere becomes a part of your personality or moral character. Moreover, there are intellectual reasoning powers within one's intellect that if practiced diligently can habituate the intellectual virtues of *practical wisdom* and *intuitive reasoning*. For instance, if you become knowledgeable about the nature and the significance concerning the moral virtues and vices of extreme and practice your moral decision making deliberately, you habituate the intellectual virtue of practical wisdom. And if you exercise your dialectical powers, prudently, you will habituate the intellectual virtue of intuitive reasoning.

However, there are also immoral reasoning functions within one's mind that can direct your intellect to perform a vice; and if this vice is practiced repetitiously, it becomes a habit. For example, if you practice the vice of intolerance repeatedly, bigotry becomes a habit, you habituate this vice of extreme, and it becomes an immoral part of your personality or moral

character. Or if you practice the vice of gluttony repeatedly, you habituate this vice of extreme, and over-indulgence becomes a pleasure seeking part of your personality or moral character.

In summary, Aristotle's process of habituation makes clear that if you practice the moral virtues repetitiously, you habituate a virtuous character. And if you practice the intellectual virtues repeatedly, wisdom and dialectical reasoning become a permanent attribute of your character. But if you practice the vices of extreme again and again, you habituate an immoral character.

### **Neurology of Habituation**

The neurology of habituation consists of a pattering of nerves situated in one's intellect. Your intellect is a network of neural pathways located in the brain. Although no objective, scientific evidence has been put forth identifying the specific anatomical location of the intellect, it can be assumed that one does exist. This is because of the self-evidency that man is able to *think*. And until this empirical observation can be falsified, beyond all reasonable doubt, it may be assumed that man has the power to deliberate, reason, understand, make moral choices, reflect, and form opinions and divine beliefs. And that these intellectual functions are integrated by a designated network of neural pathways located somewhere in the brain – that for want of a better term – may be referred to as one's intellect.

As an integral part of the brain, the intellect consists of billions of brain cells. And as the brain develops, like a sapling that sprouts the branches of a tree, these brain cells create neural connections with one another and form branches within one intellectual center in the brain. Now, as young children perform virtuous acts of conduct, the brain cells in the intellect sprout newly formed neurological branches. And as these acts of conduct are repeated, these branches form independent moral pathways. And if these same acts are practiced over and over again, they become habit and a permanent part of

the child's personality and moral character. Incidentally, adults may follow the same habit forming procedures as do children.

However, you must be reminded that your intellect is also capable of sprouting neurological branches by performing flawed acts of conduct. And that these sprouted branches may habituate a vice that becomes a permanent part of your personality an immoral character. Moreover, if you do not practice acts of virtues, the brain cells of the intellect that form the neural pathways during repetitive acts of virtuous conduct remain dormant and are pruned away. Thereby the habituation of your moral virtues does not take place and you forfeit the happiness compelled by a virtuous character.

Hopefully this neurological presentation will help you better understand Aristotle's philosophical theory of habituation.

### **Habituation Metaphor**

This habituation metaphor involves the "Hundredth Monkey Phenomenon." This phenomenon evolved from a study that was started in 1952. It was conducted on the island of Koshima, wherein a Dr. J.B. Rine and an anthropological team from Duke University studied the Japanese monkey – *Macaca Fuscata*. Part of their experiments involved observing the monkey's eating behavior. The monkeys liked raw sweet potatoes, but found the dirt that they had been grown in somewhat distasteful. Nevertheless, they continued to eat the dirty potatoes. Then, one day, an 18-month-old female named Imo found a sweet potato that had happened to roll down into a nearby stream. When she retrieved the sweet potato, she found that it tasted better, because the dirt had been washed away. Therein, she realized that she could remove the dirt by washing her sweet potatoes in that nearby stream and thereby better enjoy her sweet potato meals. Anxious to share her new experience with other, she first imparted this practice to her playmates and then to her mother and father. Subsequently, her playmates shared their potato cleaning experiences with their parents – the next tier in the tribe of Koshima monkeys to habituate this practice. Thus, this cultural

innovation was gradually passed along via the various social tiers of the Koshima monkey society. This went on slowly for several years, because only the change-receptive monkeys learned to enjoy the benefits of this lifestyle adjustment. Those monkeys that were reluctant to change kept eating the dirty sweet potatoes. Then, one day in 1958, when the “hundredth monkey” learned to wash his potatoes, an amazing phenomenon took place, as every monkey in the tribe started to wash his or her sweet potatoes. Somehow, the accumulated energy supplied by the “hundredth monkey” created a cultural break-through phenomenon, and washing their sweet potatoes became a “cultural norm.” That is to say, every Koshima monkey habituated the practice of taking their dirty sweet potato to the stream and washing it so they could better enjoy a more tasteful meal.

The saga of the “Hundredth Monkey Phenomenon,” that was chronicled in 1980, manifests the metaphorical model selected to fulfill the mission of this treatise. For you see, like the monkeys who passed along their learning experiences to their peers and parents, so too have the many early virtuous character visionaries passed along the moral reasoning principles leading to the practice of virtuous conduct and the habituation of a state of virtuous character. The mission, then for this treatise is to perpetuate a state of virtuous character throughout the progressive tiers of our society. If the metaphorical supposition portrayed above can be realized, then, like the Koshima monkeys, someday the “cultural norm” breakthrough actualized by the phenomenon of the “hundredth monkey phenomenon” may be realized for the virtuous character challenge. Plainly, however, a national cultural virtuous character norm may require considerably more participants than were needed to establish the sweet potatoes washing norm. Never-the-less, whatever the magic number may be, like the “hundredth monkey phenomenon”, the virtuous character challenge will, some day, reach its cultural breakthrough goal and America will consummate state of virtuous character. Clearly, the ambitious process will require time. However, ultimately, the virtues of honesty honor, integrity, trustworthiness,

and civility-to name a few of the major character building virtues – will become cultural norms, and viceful conduct will be obliterated. In summary, perpetuating the virtuous character challenge has been manifested as a powerful mission and offers an exciting journey for all participants who have the passion and creative energies to help consummate this noble goal.

### **Chapter Summary**

Habituation of a neuromotor skill, a moral virtue, and a vice of extreme by repetitious practice was presented. And the neurological basis for habituating intellectual neural pathways in patterning moral conduct was introduced. The next chapter will present the family virtues.

## Chapter VIII

### Family Virtues

**A** virtuous family provides a powerful, ever-abiding culture in which to practice the present-day-system of virtues manifested in Chapter 1. This righteous conduct environment captivates the opportunity to fulfill one of man's basic needs: to experience a state of family happiness by virtue of performing acts of righteous conduct. And this mandate makes clear why consummating a virtuous family emerges as a major goal within our society.

### *Pre-Nuptial Virtues*

The pre-nuptial period defines the courtship state of an emerging loving couple preparing for a total commitment to an everlasting partnership. During this period, the partners need to practice the virtue of *prudence*. Practicing the virtue of prudence reflects good judgment in recognizing partners' compatibility, common values, and the virtues relevant to a happy family.

### *Pre-Children Virtues*

The virtues appropriately relevant to the pre-children period of family development presented herein include the virtues of *caring, civility, cooperation, and faithfulness*. The virtue of caring means a person has thoughts, concerns and is anxious, eager, and solicitous to please someone. The virtue of civility involves polite and gracious acts of expression, thoughtfulness, and consideration of others. The virtue of cooperation involves working or acting together for a common purpose or benefit. The Virtue of faithfulness means that you are true to your word, promises, or vows and steadying in your allegiance and affection. In summary, practicing these virtues during the pre-children period of family development will help

create an intimate and sacred marital union. And within this union, emotional, physical, and spiritual needs will be fulfilled and personal insecurities attenuated.

### *Early Childhood Virtues*

The traumatic change that a new born experience brings by virtue of emerging from the warm, protective milieu of the mother's womb into the confronting environ of life on earth makes clear the need for parents to practice the virtue of comforting. Parental comforting involves soothing the newborn miracle by cuddling, stroking, and kissing. Comforting also involves talking, singing, and cooing. Newborns need to feel and hear these calming arts of comforting to assure them that they are loved and wanted. Parents and relatives need to practice the virtue of comforting, early-on, in order to fulfill the newborn's security and sense of well-being.

Parents need to practice the virtue of understanding, especially while the child is developing between the time of conception to the age of reason. The ability to reason usually occurs about the age of four – depending on the individual child's natural growth pattern, parents need to understand that, during these formative years, the child is attracted to interesting images. Moreover, the child is fascinated by colorful and shapely objects such as pictures, vases, or other decorative memorabilia. Unfortunately, the child may also be attracted to hazardous articles such as hot stoves, electrical outlets, or toxic containers; or endangerments such as swimming pools, ponds or unsafe pets. Obviously, parents need to protect the child from all hazardous situations. However, they need to know how to structure this protection without suppressing the child's inquisitiveness. Because, adventurous behavior during early childhood, is a natural attributive for learning. To accomplish this end, parents need to understand that shouting: "No!" to an inquisitive child becomes redundant and ultimately an ineffective approach to changing a child's behavior. Instead, parents need to safeguard the home by placing breakable memorabilia and hazardous objects out of children's reach. Moreover, parents need to devote the time and patience

needed to protectively supervise and effectively teach the child to respect and avoid hazardous situations. And finally, parents need to teach the child to avoid these perilous situations without suppressing the child's natural inquisitiveness. The virtue of parental understanding is also important between the time that the child reaches the age of reason (about four) to the time the child reaches the first grade (about six). Parents need to understand that this is the time the child learns to practice the virtue of civility, respect for other children, and social responsibility. And that this is the period when a child needs to learn that hitting, spitting, and pulling hair, etc. are unacceptable behaviors. To accomplish this end, parents need to reinforce the child's acts of good behaviors and discourage the child's acts of flawed behavior. In this way, the child will acquire the virtue of sharing, respect for playmates, and other acts of good behavior.

### *Sibling Adolescent virtues*

Sibling adolescence is a mighty challenging period in the development of families. This is the period wherein adolescents are most vulnerable to prevailing, negative cultures. This is the period when the parents need to counter the encroachment of these negative cultures. To accomplish this end, parents need to recognize the existence of the prevailing negative cultures that include – but are not limited to – peer groups who observe such non-conforming behavioral practices as substance abuse; reckless car cruising, DUI, vandalism, and shoplifting; hanging out in malls and other questionable environs; and sporting tattoos, body piercings, non-conforming hair styles, or funky clothing trends. They also need to recognize that – although adolescents have a special need to be accepted – they may not have mastered the skills required to meet the “rite-of passage” criteria established by the respective positive culture that they might like to join, for example the adolescent may not have the neuromotor skills to be accepted by an athletic culture, or the scholastic skills to be accepted by an academic culture, or the clubability skills to be accepted by a social culture. This inability to be accepted by select positive cultures makes the adolescent

susceptible to the ensnaring energies of the prevailing negative cultures. For example, it does not require any special “rite-of-passage” skill to be accepted by a risk-behavior culture – all the adolescent has to do to belong is to practice the roguish behavior programmed by that respective culture. Parents have to prepare their adolescent siblings to counterpoise these seductive counter-cultures. To accomplish this end, parents need to practice the family virtues that will nurture a secure adolescent. Thereby, the adolescent will have no need to seek the support offered by a preying negative culture and will be able to reject the false hope, rite-of-passage expectations indigenous to prevailing counter-cultures. To counter the cultures, parents need to practice the virtue of trust.

Trust is defined as the unquestioning belief in or reliance on someone, or the surety that one person has for another. Parents need to be able to place a special trust in their siblings during the period of adolescence. Because this is the period, wherein the adolescent takes responsibility for making several crucial moral decisions. For example this is the period wherein the adolescent first learns to drive a car. During this time, parents need to be able to trust their siblings to drive safely and reject any invitations to ride along with prevailing reckless, thrill-seeking peers. This is also the period wherein adolescents establish close relationships. For example, this is the period wherein the adolescent starts to date and cultivate a variety of friends. During this time, parents need to be able to trust their siblings to date persons and cultivate friends with virtuous character and avoid relationships with peers that evidence immoral behavior. And this is also the period wherein the adolescents seek acceptance into select cultures. During this time, parents need to trust their children to seek out meaningful positive cultures such as athletic, cheerleading, intramural, or debate teams; or special scholastic, service, or church clubs; and reject the lurking, risk-behavior cultures.

In view of the abundant number of cultural forces facing the adolescent, parents, need to be able to place an unquestionable trust in their

children's moral decision making. Placing such a trust can be realized if the parents perpetuate the virtues of moral reasoning and self-responsibility. Because rendering these virtues will effectuate trustworthiness. And if the virtue of trustworthiness is habituated, it will become a permanent fraction of the adolescent character.

### ***Sibling Young Adult, In-Laws, and Parental Retirement Virtues***

The virtue of respect stands out as being appropriately relevant to the family development periods of sibling young adults, in-laws, and parental retirements. Respect means to show regard or consideration for someone's rights; to refrain from intruding or interfering with someone's privacy; to accept someone's political or spiritual beliefs; and to be able to rationalize someone's idiosyncrasies. Young adults feel they have earned the right to make their own decisions. Parents need to respect this right, in spite of the fact that parental wisdom may be much greater than that of their siblings. So as young adult siblings make some of their decisions, parents must be cautious about offering advice. Because offering unselected advice may be considered intrusive. Parents may resolve this situation by nurturing secure adult siblings who are not threatened by parental support and are comfortable discussing some of their parents before they finalize their actions.

Marriage introduces a new member of the family, namely, a daughter-in-law or a son-in-law. This new family member brings along select cultural persuasions that may differ from those formed by the accepting family: education, religion, child rearing, home-chore duties, employment choices, financial management, dietary preferences, exercise regimens, family traditions, or holiday celebrations. For example, the new son or daughter in-law may have strong cultural feelings regarding when to start a family, the schooling of children, or the choice of denominational followings. There are just a few examples of the many sensitive cultural convictions that may be introduced to the accepting family. Now it is important that parents of the

accepting families practice the virtue of respect by honoring the right of the newly wedded couple to accept responsibility for interfusing the different cultural norms each may bring into the marriage. This means that parents must not interfere as the newly wedded couple workout any differing opinions about the principles of family development. Hopefully, during the courtship period, the prospective newlyweds will be able to come to some agreement regarding any major differing opinions such as, family size, principles of child rearing, or spiritual enlightenment; and hopefully they will be able to respectfully resolve any of the other differing situations that may materialize throughout the marriage. These hopeful situations may be realized if the parents have nurtured a virtuous-practicing son or daughter who will have the wisdom to select a mate that will be willing to conjoin the cultural norms that will compel a happy family. In summary, parents need to practice the virtue of respect by supporting the new son or daughter in-law as he or she integrates any differing cultural norms into a new family – as well as support their own children as he or she tries to satisfy any specific cultural traditions of the enjoining family.

### **Chapter Summary**

The virtues appropriately relevant to select periods of family development, namely, pre-nuptial, pre-children, early childhood, sibling adolescent, and sibling young adult, in-law and parental retirement were identified. These virtues included the following: prudence, caring, civility, faithfulness, comforting, understanding, trust and respect. Evidence was presented manifesting that practicing these virtues will compel a happy family.

## **Chapter IX**

### **Virtuous Conduct Intervention in Schools**

School systems provide an extensive window of opportunity to nurture virtuous conduct in children and young adults. This is true, because these age groups, for the most part, attend schools from ages 4-18. Moreover, many young adults enroll in community colleges and universities. These educational placements provide an opening to nurture virtuous characters in the younger generation over a period of 14 years and an additional 2-10 years for student in higher education, if you include graduate school. These extended dispositions make clear the potential that educational systems have to influence a virtuous character in rising generations. This likelihood manifests the significance of developing virtuous conduct intervention programs throughout all levels of education, from pre-kindergarten through higher education.

### ***Status of Teachers Preparation for Virtuous Intervention Programs in Schools***

A review of the literature suggests that teachers receive virtually no formal teacher preparation to ready them to teach the principles of virtuous conduct intervention. And, that virtuous conduct intervention program are not considered a high priority at either the under graduate or graduate level. Consequently, teachers appear to lack the “moral instruction literacy” expected to develop an effective and comprehensive virtuous conduct intervention program. To address this deficiency, teacher education departments need to prepare teachers to be able to develop an effective virtuous conduct intervention program in the schools. The objective of such a program should be to nurture an understanding and awareness of the following components: moral reasoning, personal decision making, perceived competencies, and the 3 Rs of teaching virtuous conduct.

### ***Moral Reasoning***

The moral reasoning component should develop these following intellectual competencies:

- Understanding one's need to identify a purpose in life.
- Recognizing that the pursuit of happiness requires fulfillment of one's physiological, intellectual, emotional, ethical, and morbidity prevention needs.
- Identifying the moral virtues and their respective vices of extreme as manifested by societal norms.
- Taking advantage of one's endowed free will and accepting its accompanying responsibilities.
- Formalizing the physiological-intellectual principles of behavioral habituation.
- Habituating the virtues that compel a state of happiness.
- Developing the intellectual virtues of *practical wisdom* and *intuitive reasoning*.

Although these are the major objectives of the moral reasoning fraction of an effective virtuous conduct intervention programs in the schools, other objectives may be included as long as they meet the criteria of *relevancy*.

### ***Personal Decisions Rights***

Adolescents, for the most part, do not believe that all behavioral choices should be governed by moral reasoning principles, existing laws, social norms, or parental rules. And they view some of the dictates put forth by these entities as arbitrary and impersonal. For example, some adolescents view engagement in use of recreational drugs, sexual involvement, and antisocial behavior as a matter of personal choice, rather than a sumptuary issue. This view is consistent with the literature that suggests that some adolescents, typically, may be tied only loosely to societal thinking and parental controls; and that their emphasis on personal choice is related to their desire for identity and autonomy. In this regard, adolescents believe that individual behavior which effects only themselves such as the use of recreation drugs, sexual intercourse, or anti social behavior should be a "personal decision right." In this regard, it is interesting to note that recent behavioral studies report that of the adolescents surveyed: 80% had consumed alcohol, 60% had used marijuana, 50% had engaged in sexual

intercourse, 33% had been involved in unprotected sexual relations, 33% were caught up with shoplifting, and 50% had experienced physical confrontations with other adolescents. This data makes it clear that some adolescents are eager to exercise their right to make personal decisions regarding individual behavioral choices.

The reported risk behavior evidenced in adolescents makes clear that this age group, in particular, needs to be made aware that the right to make personal decisions carries with it specific responsibilities and that if one performs a flawed behavioral act; they must accept the subsequent consequences, and that performance of a flawed behavioral act compels a state of unhappiness.

### *Perceived Competency*

Students, who perceive themselves as being less competent scholastically, athletically, and socially, will engage in risky behavior more frequently, than adolescents that perceive themselves as more competent. Perceived competency levels are correlated with the concepts of self-worth and self-efficacy, low levels of self-worth decrease one's consciousness of social norms and low levels self-efficacy (the perception of your ability to make virtuous and ethical decisions) diminishes one's will to deal with virtuous and ethical conduct effectively. Therefore, it seems clear that perceived competency is an important component that needs to be included in the structuring of any comprehensive virtuous conduct intervention model.

### *The 3Rs of Teaching Virtuous Conduct*

The 3Rs of teaching virtuous conduct--relevancy readiness and responsibility; represent effective enlightenment strategies for perspective intervention teachers. Below you will find a manifestation of these three teaching strategies:

*Relevancy* – This principle proclaims that the teacher accept the incumbency for selecting concepts to be taught that are relevant to

the student's needs. Students must be convinced that all moral reasoning components are consequential to a meaningful purpose in life.

*Readiness* – A state of student readiness is realized if the student enters the classroom hungry to learn. The student must be satisfied that, when he or she enters the classroom he or she will realize an exciting, fulfilling, and enjoyable learning experience. To realize this learning experience, students need to be encouraged rather than intimidated. They need to be inspired rather than indoctrinated.

*Responsibility* – In spite of all the energies that may be put forth to nurture a state of student readiness, the student must be convinced to accept the ultimate responsibility for his or her acquisition of knowledge. To this end, they must accept the challenge to overpower the negative, cultural forces, personal dilemmas, and insecurities that inhibit the state of readiness. And, finally, the student must be made to realize that being afforded a functional, readiness-to-learn environment cannot overcome a student's defiant attitude to learn.

### ***Relevance Initiative***

When I was in my last year of college, I was a substitute teacher in the Chicago public schools. One day, I received an assignment to sub at a continuation high school. It was a school that students, who wanted to drop out of high school, had to attend until they reached the age of sixteen. Needless to say, the risk behavior level of these students was extremely high. Never-the-less, I accepted the assignment. When I reported to the school for my assignment particulars, I asked the office receptionist for a course outline and curriculum study guide. She said, just a minute, I think you need to talk with our assistant principal. He was a large man, with a battle-worn face, who looked like he was anxiously ready to retire. He said "so you want a course outline and a curriculum study guide, do you." I replied "yes sir." He said "son, let me tell you a story about the last sub that tried to teach that class. The students locked him in a closet, started a fire, and set-off the fire alarms. He only lasted one day! So here's the deal. If

you can keep those students inside the classroom and control the noise, you can have 10 days of work; that is all that's left to this semester."

Needing the money, I accepted the assistant principal's offer. When I entered the classroom, I was confronted with a cohort of uninviting adolescents. Accepting the situation, I told the class to close their text books and that I was not going to present an irrelevant lecture. Instead, I passed out an accumulation of sports magazines that I had stashed in my travel bag. Subsequently we had a question and answer period, followed by a discussion about individual sports heroes.

Next, I asked what was the student's favorite subject. They all replied: "Sex." Fortunately, I had some training experience in adolescent behavior on that subject. Consequently, I was able to facilitate an interesting session on the needs, allurements, and responsibilities of a physical relationship. I was surprised at the maturity and relevancy that both genders evidenced during the discussion of this common subject.

Then, I announced that we were going to close the day with an amateur hour. They sang, lip-synced, danced, pantomimed, recited poetry, and even conjured up a one act unrehearsed play. After the last act, they insisted that I be part of the show. So I sang one of my favorite bar-room favorites and they gave me a standing ovation.

When the bell rang for dismissal, I gathered my sport journals and reported to the office to sign out. When the vice principal saw me he said, "I don't know what the hell you did with those students, but you are the first sub who has been able to keep order in that classroom. You've discovered the secret to teaching."

That evening, I tried to figure out how it came about, that I was able to handle that class so effectively. It was not something I was taught in school. Then I remembered that as a student I had learned that no teacher could hold my interest if I could not see the relevancy of the subject matter. But that if I was convinced there was relevancy to what was being presented, I responded positively.

So when I recognized that those continuation students were merely biding their time in school until they were sixteen, I knew that expounding subject matter rhetoric as of no interest to the students and would be futile. So I elected to introduce select experiences relevant to the situation.

As a result of the wakening insight that evolved from that substitute experience, over the years, I have perfected the art and science of presenting material that was relevant and not superficial to the student needs. And I made sure I marketed this teaching strategy at the beginning of each class session, to affect student readiness to learn.

In summary, the principle of relevancy has emerged as one of the major components of my 3 R's of teaching and has been a significant contribution to my teaching career. As evidence to this observation are my teaching evaluations. Throughout my years of teaching, students have ranked me as "outstanding." They appreciate my teaching style because I don't assign endless chapters to read. I only present the select concepts that matter. I don't require a text. I don't take attendance. And they can attend class knowing that they will have a relevant and revealing experience.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter makes clear the impact that schools have on influencing virtuous conduct in children and young adults and the status of teacher preparation for virtuous intervention programs in schools. It also presents the major component to be included in an effective, virtuous perceived competency, and the 3 R's of teaching virtuous conduct. Finally, my initiation to teaching was described. The next chapter will feature Body Incontinence.

# Chapter X

## Athletic Virtues and Vices

This chapter will introduce the paramount virtue and the grievous vice associated with athletic character.

### *The Ultimate Virtue*

The ultimate virtue that every athlete should strive for is to perform at your highest level of excellence. This tenet is true for all levels of athletic performance: professional, intercollegiate, interscholastic, intramural or amateur-recreational. It doesn't matter if you're a professional quarterback, college basketball center, high school swimmer, little league pitcher, amateur golfer, international soccer goalie, local triathlete, or senior games race-walker – the foremost virtue for every athlete is to perform at your highest level of neuromotor skill, function at your maximum physiological capacity, and compete in a most honorable manner. Perfecting these virtues will dispatch the ultimate goal for every athlete; which is to realize a state of self-worth by virtue of the integrity of your athletic performance.

If you perform at your highest level of athletic and ethical excellence, you will savor this feeling of self-worthiness, regardless of whether you win or lose your athletic event. The reason for this is that the mathematical score of any athletic contest may depend upon several extraneous variables, over which you may have no control. Some of these variables include the following: age, height, weight, experience, neuromuscular and contraction speed, and the comparative skills of your opponent. Thus, the score of an athletic contest may reflect select anatomical, physiological, and skill-experience differences rather than comparative athletic performances. This contention means that although the score at the end of an athletic event is not in your favor, you still may have outperformed your opponent. In this situation, you are a “performance winner.” And consequently, you are entitled to experience a state of self-worthiness. With this rational in mind, you should have no remorse about the numerical score of a participated—in athletic event if, indeed, you did perform at your maximal capacity.

Oh, some may say: “there is no glory in losing.” This would imply that, all the athletic events that take place in the side world of sports, half of the contestants

would be considered losers. This attitude seems distorted and unfair to the participants who happen to have been scheduled to compete against an opponent who is more physically endowed and as a higher level of skill and experience. Contrarily, it seems far more realistic to appropriately recognize the score-wise winner, but also to respect the participant with the lesser numerical score, especially, if they did their very best. Therefore, there seems to be a problem with the proposition: "There is no glory in losing."

Another philosophical problem, when comparing winning to losing, is the proposition that everyone admires a winner. For example, is it a virtue to defeat an inferior opponent, in spite of the fact that you did not put forth your best effort? That is to say, suppose you were scheduled to compete against an opponent who was anatomically inferior, less experienced, rates as a distinct underdog, and that you held the home-site advantage which included spectator support and the opportunity to be better acclimated to the local heat and humidity; and that during the athletic contest, you received luckier breaks in the officiating. Now at the end of the contest, the score indicates that you had won. However, in the final analysis, it turns that your opponent far out-performed you, almost pulled an upset, and had experienced a moral victory. Under these circumstances, it seems hard to accept the proposition that: "every body admires a winner."

The above scenario brings forth the question: would you rather compete against a scheduled inferior opponent. Perform submaxillary and have the higher score at the end of an athletic contest; or compete against a scheduled superior opponent, perform optimally, and have a lower but respectable score at the end of an athletic contest? If you choose the former, you may rationalize a score-wise win, but in all honesty, you may not completely enjoy the virtue of self-worthiness. However, if you choose the latter, you will accept the challenge, perform at our highest level of excellence, and welcome the opportunity to experience a numerical score upset. By choosing this road, you will feel proud of your performance regardless of the final score. Moreover, you will enjoy the feeling of self-worthiness.

In summary, the above presentation is directed to convince you that, whether you win or lose, performing at your highest level of excellence is a primary virtue of all athletes: and that by practicing this virtue, you will habituate a virtuous athletic character.

### ***The Ultimate Vice***

The ultimate vice that every athlete should strive to avoid is *vaingloriousness*. Vaingloriousness is the vice of excess that involves performing for recognition rather than for a personal performance excellence. For example, you are vain, if after an athletic contest it is imperative that you search for self-gratifying media reports. You are vain, if you yearn for praise. You are vain, if you have ambition to be honored for your athletic prowess. And you are vain, if your primary goal is to bathe in the glory of your victories.

In striving to avoid the ultimate vice of vaingloriousness, you need to practice the virtue of *praiseworthiness*. Praiseworthiness requires that the primary goal for an athlete should be to perform at his or her highest level of excellence and to demonstrate disdain for any temptation to pursue an unrealistic passion for fame. However, it is virtuous to accept praise with humility and nobility, when it is genuinely merited, and unsoughtfully forthcoming. In summary, the above discussion makes clear the virtue of repulsing any passion to search for glorification.

### ***Peers vs. Self-Competition***

Another philosophical component of sports character is *peer-competition vs. self-competition*. Peer competition exposes participant to possible performance vices. For example, if you degrade your opponent, you are guilty of the vice of *degradation*; if you intentionally harm your opponent, you are guilty of *harmfulness*; if you take unfair advantage of your .....

### ***Examples of Virtuous Athletic Character***

#### **Softball**

In a recent girls' softball intercollegiate championship, a player hit an over-the-fence home run to win the game. However, as she rounded second base, she fell to the ground with a dislocated knee. As she lay on the ground, unable to complete her home run path, a teammate proceeded to her aid. But the coach interceded, and said that it was illegal for a teammate to help her. One of the players on the other team, recognized the prevailing dilemma, picked up her fallen opponent,

supported her upright position, and walked her around to home plate. This was a nationally reported story that gives testimony to an act of virtuous athletic conduct.

### Road Race

Near the finish line, a runner was putting on an end-of-race sprint. Before him was a fatigued runner trying to finish. Just before the finish line, the sprinting runner was in a position to pass the fatigued runner. But instead of passing him, he grabbed his hand and went over the line together. This is another example of virtuous athletic conduct.

### Golf

In a country club golf match, where in the rule may not be so stringent, a player hit a ball out of the round trap. He reported that his club face had contacted the ball twice as he followed through on his shot. Subsequently, he assessed the appropriate penalty. You see these self assess penalties many times on national television when a golfer accidentally performs a rule infraction. These examples are evidence of great respect and the ethical integrity in the sport of golf.

### All Sports

You see many examples of virtuous character in all sports. However, you also see select acts of questionable athletic conduct. Hopefully, someday these athletes will gain the wisdom to realize that virtuous character in sports is noble and that to perform with excellence is the ultimate goal of the virtuous athletic conduct.

## Chapter Summary

Evidence was presented to make clear that performing at your maximal level of excellence is the ultimate goal for all athletic performances, that bathing in the rationalizing of victory in spite of sub-standard performance is a major vice for all athletes; that vaingloriousness is an embarrassing vice and that peer competition may viceful behavior during athletic events, while peer-competition may be more conducive to virtuous behavior during athletic performance.

# Chapter XI

## Body Contenance

The final chapter of this treatise will be devoted to *Body Contenance*. Body contenance may be defined as the voluntary temperament to maintain a healthy body. Maintaining a healthy body involves a nurturing the physiological integrity of the body's cardiovascular and neuromuscular systems and preventing the premature onset of morbidity.

## *Body Incontinence*

In contrast to body contenance, Body Incontinence may be defined as the temporary failure to maintain a healthy body for whatever reason. Failure to maintain a healthy body provokes the premature onset of morbidity. Morbidity is the degenerative disease processes associated with aging: coronary artery disease (CAD), cardiovascular disease (CVD), hypertension, obesity, diabetes, dementia, infertility, osteoarthritis, Sarcopenia<sup>6</sup>, and osteoporosis. Metabolic disorders, respiratory complications, and loss of balance and joint flexibility.

If you visit a nursing home, you will find victims in their sixties suffering from the premature onset of morbidity. You may see a patient inflicted with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) breathing through a nose tube and pushing an oxygen cart; or a stroke victim in a motorized wheel-chair with left side extremity dysfunction; or a frail patient in bed needing to be tube-fed; or a person with a CAD suffering from chronic fatigue; or a woman with a "dowagers hump;" or a man who fell out of bed, broke his legs, and died because his osteoporotic bones were unable to heal; or the obese individual with hypertension, diabetes and an amputated extremity. All of these pain suffering and debilitating states of premature morbidity are dispositions of an incontinent individual.

These states of morbidity can be prevented by developing an understanding and appreciation for the intervention strategies that attenuate<sup>7</sup> physiological declines. These strategies include compliance and adherence to an effective

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<sup>6</sup> Sarcopenia is defined as the loss of muscle strength and vascular integrity.

<sup>7</sup> To reduce in force or value.

exercise and nutrition intervention program. In this regard, it is important to note that according to nationally reported health status statistics, the majority of Americans are not practicing the exercise and nutrition strategies needed to prevent the premature onset of the degenerative diseases associated with morbidity. If you are one of those majority of Americans who are temporarily in a state of body incontinence and failing to maintain a healthy body. You need to question why your body may be in such a morbidity-prone state. One of the major reasons that you are in a temporary flawed state of body incontinence may be that you lack the exercise physiology knowledge needed to understand and appreciate the value of exercise in maintaining a healthy body. Below you will find an exercise physiology presentation that will resolve this deficiency and encourage you to comply and adhere to an affective exercise intervention program. (Note: knowledge concerning an effective nutrition intervention program will be presented late in this chapter).

### *Exercise Physiology*

One of the major degenerative processes associated with morbidity is coronary artery disease (CAD). One's total cholesterol high density lipoprotein cholesterol rate (TC/HDL) is the second most powerful prediction of CAD. Exercise has been proven to lower one's low density lipoprotein LDL, the bad cholesterol fraction of your TC and elevates one's HDL, the good cholesterol fraction of your TC. These cholesterol fraction changes lower your TC/HDL ration and reduce your risk of developing CAD.

Another major degenerative disease process associated with morbidity is cardiovascular disease (CVD) a host of studies shows that exercise helps maintain the integrity of your heart muscle and your circulatory vessels, and thereby helps attenuate the premature onset of hypertension, diabetes, intracranial strokes, and heart failure.

A third major degenerative disease process associated with morbidity is the accumulation of excess-body fat. More than 66% of Americans are overweight or obese. And obesity is the third most powerful prediction of CAD, CHD, and as many

as twenty six other degenerative diseases. Exercise has been shown to be one of the most effective intervention factors in reducing excess-body fat.

A fourth major factor in combating morbidity is preventing the premature onset of Sarcopenia. It is important to note, that the bodies neuromuscular system is composed of 660 different muscle groups. This muscle mass constitutes 45% of your total body weight. These muscle groups need to be exerted in order to prevent the muscle mass loss associated with aging. (Note: the average reduction in muscle tissue volume, from age 30-70, is 30%. Because muscle tissue is the highest metabolic tissue in the body, any loss of muscle tissue volume significantly lowers your resting metabolic rate (RMR). Now, your RMR is the amount of calories that the cells of your body organs burn at rest; and your RMR is a major contributor to you RMR. Therefore, it is clear that if you lose any amount of this high metabolic tissue as you age, your total daily caloric expenditure is going to be less than the calories ingested from a normal caloric diet. And, as a result of this caloric unbalance, over time your body will accumulate excess fat. Resistance training exercise routines serve to increase skeletal muscle tissue and enhance your RMR.

An effective exercise intervention program also accomplishes the following:

1. Stimulates neurons in the motor center of the brain that activates paralleling memory center neurons, which helps alleviate the memory losses associated with dementia.
2. Enhances the integrity of your abdominal and lower back muscles and helps prevent lower back pain.
3. Helps prevent select cancers and sleep apnea associated with obesity.
4. Attenuates the decline in muscle strength that accompanies aging and helps prevent the premature onset of postural, locomotive, and kinesthetic performance disabilities.
5. Maintains joint flexibility and muscle joint integrity and helps prevent the early onset of osteoarthritis.
6. Increases your maximum oxygen utilization – the most representative measure of physiological fitness.

The above presentation should help resolve any lack of exercise physiology knowledge needed to understand and appreciate the value of complying and adhering to an effective exercise intervention program and preventing the premature onset of morbidity.

However, there are other reasons that may discourage one from participating in a healthy exercise program. That is to say, there may be mitigating circumstances that may enjoin your realization of a healthy exercise program. These mitigating circumstances are listed below:

- Professional responsibilities
- Family responsibilities
- Recreational choices
- Entertainment choices
- Over scheduling commitments
- Flawed priority decisions
- Low tolerance to exercise discomfort
- Low tolerance to exercise pain
- Lack of family support
- Lack of cohort support
- Prevailing physical handicaps
- Lack of self-discipline
- Insecurity regarding exercise routines
- Sedentary lifestyle history
- Lack of appreciation for the ethereal
- Resonance that occurs during the subsequent to an exercise experience

Hopefully, you will recognize the conflicting impact that any one or more of these circumstances may have on your adherence and compliance to an effective exercise intervention program. And by prioritizing your values, find the time and wherewithal to overcome these circumstances and practice the exercise intervention virtues that will compel a healthy body.

In summary, there seems to be little doubt regarding the wisdom of adhering to an effective exercise intervention program. If you already follow such a program, you need to continue this habit as part of your permanent lifestyle. If you don't, you need to initiate a lifestyle change and make a breakthrough decision to start a

moderate neuromuscular and cardiovascular intervention program. Below you will find the guidelines for initiating such a program.

In the beginning, the program should be very basic. For example, you could start your neuromuscular resistance training programs by executing a few bent knee sit-ups. This exercise routine should be slow and deliberate as you sit up with arms extended forward and then return to your prone starting position. You could also perform a few knee support type push-ups. These should also be performed slowly and deliberately. Schedule this regime twice a week. Limit the number of repetitions for each exercise to a number you can perform with perfect form. Starting with a moderate number of repetitions will help prevent injuries, facilitate repetition load progressions and encourage adherence and compliance.

For your cardiovascular program, you need to start with a basic walking routine. Mark off a convenient track site. Start with a  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile distance. Walk twice a week at a comfortable pace. Record your walk times so you can have a base-line to compare your progressions. This quantification strategy will enable you to utilize your progression accomplishments to impel increases your walk pace times and distances. The moderate walk program described above is easy to start, convenient to follow, low in cost, non-traumatic to the body, and extremely practical.

### ***Nutrition***

Still another body incontinence defect that prevents you from acting as you ought when it comes to maintaining a healthy body is following an unhealthy diet. Below you will find select reasons that you may be practicing a flawed nutritional program:

- Stress reactive eating behavior
- Eating to relieve boredom
- Failure to recognize the onset of satiety
- Low self-worth
- Inability to differentiate between nutritious and unhealthy foods
- Susceptible to the vice of overindulgence

Failure to take the time to identify, and select the low fat and low sugar foods that you like so you can enjoy and maintain a healthy body. Resolving these

nutritional behavior flaws should help you adhere to healthy diet and complement the exercise intervention program you are following to maintain a healthy body. To help you in this quest, refer to Tables 1-4, and study the nutritional choices – based on the reported literature – that I have selected for my personal nutritional menu.

**TABLE 1**  
**BREAKFAST**

	<b>CALORIES</b>	<b>PROTEIN (g)</b>	<b>FIBER (g)</b>	<b>SAT. FAT (g)</b>	<b>GI*</b>	<b>SODIUM (mg)</b>
<b>Quaker Oats</b>	150	5	4	1	42	0
<b>MILK</b> Non-Fat/Lactaid	80	8	0	0	32	125
<b>EGGS (2)</b> Hard Boiled/Whites Only	80	13	0	1	0	31
<b>FRUIT</b>						
Orange Juice (Fresh)	111	2	1	0	52	30
Blueberries (1/2 Cup)	41	1	4	0		2
Raspberries (1/2 Cup)	32	2	8	0		1
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>494 Cal.</b>	<b>31 g</b>	<b>17 g</b>	<b>2 g</b>	<b>126 g</b>	<b>189 g</b>

\*Glycemic Index (GI): a numerical value indicating how carbohydrates affect blood sugar levels. High GI foods, greater than 50, are absorbed quickly, and increase blood sugar levels and the secretion of insulin. This reaction produces hypoglycemia – low blood sugar which results in fatigue. Moreover high GI foods reduce fat metabolism.

**TABLE 2**  
**LUNCH**

	<b>CALORIES</b>	<b>PROTEIN (g)</b>	<b>FIBER (g)</b>	<b>SAT. FAT (g)</b>	<b>GI*</b>	<b>SODIUM (mg)</b>
<b>Sandwich (Open face)</b>						
Turkey (White meat)	27	2	1	0	0	47
Bread (Whole Grain)	80	3	2	0	77	156
Romaine Lettuce	2	0	0	0	0	1
Tomato	15	2	2	1	38	9
Mayonnaise (Smart Balance, Omega, 1TbIs)	50	1	0	0		11.5
<b>Soup ( 1 Cup)</b> (Chicken/Vegetable Homemade)	110	7	0	0		
<b>Iced Tea</b>	2	0	0	0	0	7
<b>Dessert</b>						
Cherries (1/2 Cup)	37	1	2	220	3	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>323 Cal.</b>	<b>16 g</b>	<b>7 g</b>	<b>21 g</b>	<b>118 g</b>	<b>231.5 mg</b>

\*Glycemic Index (GI): a numerical value indicating how carbohydrates affect blood sugar levels. High GI foods, greater than 50, are absorbed quickly, and increase blood sugar levels and the secretion of insulin. This reaction produces hypoglycemia – low blood sugar which results in fatigue. Moreover high GI foods reduce fat metabolism.

**TABLE 3****DINNER**

	<b>CALORI ES</b>	<b>PROTE IN (g)</b>	<b>FIBER (g)</b>	<b>SAT. FAT (g)</b>	<b>GI*</b>	<b>SODI UM (mg)</b>
<b>Salmon</b> (Sockeye)	183	27	0	1	0	457
<b>Beer</b> (Domestic)	117	1	0	0	0	14
<b>Salad</b>						
Beansprouts	15	2	1	0	0	175
Carrots (baby)	4	1	0	0	2	8
Celery	17	1	2	0	0	96
Lettuce (Iceberg)	54	4	5	0	0	49
Peppers (Sweet)	24	1	2	0	0	4
Olives (2)	14	0	0	0		240
Onions						
<b>Salad Dressing</b>						
Vinegar (1 Tbls) - Red Wine	2	0	0	0		0
Olive Oil (1 Tbls)	120	0	0	0		0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>550 Cal.</b>	<b>37 g</b>	<b>10 g</b>	<b>1 g</b>	<b>2 g</b>	<b>1043 mg</b>

\*Glycemic Index (GI): a numerical value indicating how carbohydrates affect blood sugar levels. High GI foods, greater than 50, are absorbed quickly, and increase blood sugar levels and the secretion of insulin. This reaction produces hypoglycemia – low blood sugar which results in fatigue. Moreover high GI foods reduce fat metabolism.

**TABLE 4**  
**TOTALS**

	<b>CALORIES</b>	<b>PROTEIN (g)</b>	<b>FIBER (g)</b>	<b>SAT. FAT (g)</b>	<b>GI*</b>	<b>SODIUM (mg)</b>
<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>494</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>189</b>
<b>Lunch</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>231.5</b>
<b>Dinner</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1043</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1367 Cal</b>	<b>84 g</b>	<b>34 g</b>	<b>24 g</b>	<b>246 g</b>	<b>1463.5 mg</b>

\*Glycemic Index (GI): a numerical value indicating how carbohydrates affect blood sugar levels. High GI foods, greater than 50, are absorbed quickly, and increase blood sugar levels and the secretion of insulin. This reaction produces hypoglycemia – low blood sugar which results in fatigue. Moreover high GI foods reduce fat metabolism.

Tables 1-4 identify the food choices included in my menu planning. Obviously, food tastes are individually specific so you will have to develop your own meal plan. Perhaps the rationale for my food selections will help you choose foods that you enjoy, and are also healthy choices.

Oatmeal is a breakfast choice cereal, because it's virtually free of saturated fat, sugars and sodium. It is high in fiber and tastes good. Raspberries are a high fiber fruit and blueberries contain flavonoids – a natural compound that protects the brain's memory carrying cells from the negative effects of oxidation and inflammation. Hard boiled egg whites are the purist form of proteins. And no-fat lactaid milk aids digestion for the lactose intolerant.

Salads, soups, or sandwiches (turkey, chicken or fish) are good choices for lunch. Cherries are also good, because they contain resveratrol – a compound that lowers (LDL) – your bad cholesterol fraction. Red wine, red grapes, red wine vinegar also contain resveratrol.

King, sockeye or coho salmon are good choices for dinner, because they are low in saturated fat and high in Omega-3s. A salad with your choice of fresh

vegetables and an oil/vinegar dressing is also a good choice. A beer or a glass of wine is also good, because one or two drinks a day elevate HDL – your good cholesterol fraction.

Table 4, shows that my daily intake is about 1,500 calories: This is more than my resting metabolic needs (1,200 calories), but well below the average energy expenditure of an active male (2,400 calories). All foods are within RDA guidelines. GI value for my foods are all below 50 (recommended guidelines).

The reason my total daily caloric intake was less than 1,500 calories is obvious. Selected foods are all low in saturated, trans, and hydrogenated fats. And low in caloric values. So by avoiding the high calorie fat foods, one is able to manage a low calorie diet. The strategy, then, is to take the time to read food labels and select and prepare taste satisfying foods so that you have no need to eat the high fat foods.

Below you will find a list of foods to avoid:

- High saturated fat foods
- Trans fat foods
- Hydrogenated fat foods
- High glycemic index foods (greater than 50)
- Processed foods
- High sugar drinks
- High sugar packaged foods
- Refined white breads and rolls
- High salt content foods
- Fast food products
- Frozen dinners (high in sodium)
- High Omega – 6 foods (cause organ inflammation; but Omega -3 foods are good – they reduce the risk of CAD.

### ***Incontinent Awakening***

In 1979, I was climbing the steps of the university classroom building. At the second floor landing, I had to rest, I was out of breath. It was then I realized I was growing old.

The next day, I walked around the block in my neighborhood – 1/3 of a mile. Four weeks later, I entered a one mile road race. When I was about 100 yards from the finish line, one of my doctoral students shouted: “Go for it Dr. Rohter.” An adrenalin rush came on, and I sprinted across the finish line with my arms stretched high. I thought I was in the Olympics. I knew if I keep exercising I did not have to grow old prematurely. So developed a healthy diet, extending by exercise regimen to include resistance training, and have realized a healthy lifestyle for the last 29 years.

Do I have a continent body? Observe my physiological profile:

- Blood Pressure 118/76 mm
- Body Fat % 10 (Average male % = 15)
- Total Cholesterol/High Density
  - o Lyprotein ratio – 2.1 less than 10% risk for CAD)
- Creactive protein: value (organ inflammation index) – 1.0 (low risk for CAD)
- Height 6 feet, Weight 160 lbs.
- Degenerative disease assessments: negative
- Physiological age: 39

## Chapter Summary

Listed below are the findings revealed in this chapter:

- Body incontinence is the temporary failure to maintain a healthy body.
- There are many reasons that may be discouraging you from complying and adhering to an effective exercise and nutrition intervention program.
- You can resolve any of the reason you may not be acting as you ought when it comes to maintaining a healthy body by following an effective exercise and nutrition intervention program that will impel a state of body continence.
- Complying to an effective exercise and nutrition intervention program will maintain the integrity of your cardiovascular and neuromuscular systems and prevent the premature onset of the following physiological processes associated with aging:
  - o Loss of muscle strength
  - o Reduction of muscle tissue volume
  - o Lowering of RMR
  - o Accumulation of excess body fat
  - o Decrease in LDL (“Bad” cholesterol fraction)

- o Increase in HDL (“good” cholesterol fraction)
- o Formation of atherosclerotic coronary artery plaques
- o Decrease in maximum oxygen utilization – the most representative measure of physiological fitness.
- o Premature onset of CAD, diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, kidney disease, osteoarthritis, select cancers, infertility, lower back pain, sleep apnea, morbidity and mortality.

In summary, you have been made aware of the physiological benefits accruing from a comprehensive exercise and nutrition intervention program. Hopefully you will be able to resolve any of the temporary reasons you may not be acting as you ought when it comes to maintaining a healthy body and follow a lifestyle that will impel a state of body incontinence. In this regard however, you must remember that you have a “free will”. And in accordance with Aristotelian Ethics, you alone are responsible for the lifestyle you follow. Convinced that you will choose to maintain a continent body, I wish you well and may your coffin be made of 100 year pine that is yet to be planted.

## Epilogue

When Dante (Dante's Inferno) met Beatrice – his true love – he proclaimed “Vita Nuova.” Translated, this means, “New Life.” Having from this far in reviewing this manuscript, perhaps you are ready to proclaim your own “Vita Nuova.” For, hopefully you are ready to reward yourself for the endless number of virtues that you practice throughout each day except the fulfillment of being a person of virtuous character and savor a state of infinite happiness.

# Glossary

**Acquired Desire:** Not indispensable to human life; not a “must”, rather a “want” developed throughout life.

**Act of Conduct:** Personal behavior; way of acting.

**Aristotle:** An ennobled Greek philosopher (384-322 B.C.); an ethical theorist, logician, and framer of the renowned classification golden mean moral and intellectual virtues.

**Aristotelian Ethics:** A philosophical treatise dealing the right and wrong of human conduct as derived by natural law – a body of laws reaped from the practical reason that governs the human conduct that is ethically binding in a human society.

**Attenuate:** To reduce in force or value.

**Axiom:** A universally accepted principle that requires no proof.

**Beatific Vision:** The divine pathway to “Eternal Happiness.”

**Beneficence:** The doing of good; active goodness.

**Body Incontinence:** A temporary failure to maintain a healthy body – for whatever reason.

**Character:** The sum of all the traits and characteristics that make up our individual personality. It involves your good habits and ethical qualities as well as your immoral habits and unethical qualities. If you practice the moral and intellectual virtues and disdain the flawed acts of behavior, you will habituate a virtuous character.

**Compel:** To force or drive to a course of action; to have a powerful or irresistible effect or influence.

**Consummation of Happiness:** To bring about a state of perfection; to perfect a virtuous behavioral habit; to fulfill man’s (human’s) purpose in life.

**Contra-Vice, Virtue:** A virtue with only one vice of extreme that is a direct opposite of its respective virtue.

**Coronary Artery Disease (CAD):** The number one killer in America; a critical heart disease caused by atherosclerotic plaques that form in the coronary arteries, and block the blood flow in the heart.

**Cultures:** the behavior and beliefs characteristics of a particular social, ethnic, or age group; the sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings.

**Desire Knowledge:** This Aristotelian truism posits that your *desire for knowledge* is made clear by the pleasure you take in exercising your sensory faculties. They

very fact that you take pleasure in exercising your sensory faculties makes clear your natural desire for knowledge.

**Devine:** Pertaining to God, especially the supreme being; heavenly kingdom.

**Dialectical:** The art or practice of logical discussion as employed in investigating the truth of a theory or opinion.

**Early Childhood Virtues:** That period of family development that includes – the time from conception to childbirth; the time from childbirth to the age of reason (about the age of 4), and the time from the age of reason to the 1<sup>st</sup> grade.

**Ecclesial Virtues:** Virtues based denominational teachings, reverent covenants, sacred commandments, devotional convictions, and solomen faith.

**Empirical:** Derived from or guided by experience or experiment, depending upon method or theory, provable by experience.

**End:** The philosophical object for which a thing exists; purpose or goal.

**Epilogue:** Concluding part added to literary work.

**Eternal Happiness:** The divine happiness that prevails after life on earth.

**Ethos:** The fundamental character or spirit of a culture; the underlying sentiments that informs the beliefs, customs, or practices of a group or society; dominant assumptions of a people or period; the character or disposition of a community, group or person; the moral element that determines a state of character.

**Excess Body Fat:** A postulated vice of extreme; the percent of body fat over the minimal amount of fat needed to maintain a healthy body, which is approximately, 12% for females and 4% for males.

**Fat Accompli:** (French) An accomplished fact; a thing already done.

**Fallibility:** Liable to err; being deceived or mistaken; liable to be erroneous or fails; not accurate.

**Family Virtues:** Select virtues appropriately relevant to the following periods of family development – pre-nuptial; pre-children; children/early childhood; sibling adolescent; and sibling young adult, in-law, and parental retirement.

**Free Will:** The second of Aristotle's major axioms. It means that you – and you alone – decide your destiny.

**Golden Mean Virtues:** A category of Aristotle's famed system of virtues that includes select moral and intellectual virtues accompanied by their respective vices of extreme, namely the vice of *excess* and the vice of *deficit*.

**Good:** Moral excellence, virtuous, righteousness, praise, or beneficent.

**Habituation:** To accustom the mind as to a particular situation; to cause to become an intellectual habit by virtue of repeated practice.

**Happiness:** Man's (human's) purpose in life; an abstract state that is *Universal* – a relevant goal for mankind and *Intellectually – Infinite* and ubiquitous end that prevails and transcends into eternity.

**The Hundredth Monkey Phenomenon:** An amazing event that occurred in 1958, when the 100<sup>th</sup> monkey of the Macaca tribe learned to wash her sweet potato in the local stream. Somehow, the accumulated energy of the 100<sup>th</sup> monkey inspired a cultural break through-as every other member of the monkey tribe, simultaneously, decided to wash their sweet potato in the nearby stream.

**Incontinence:** A temporary defect in character, during which time a person – for whatever reason – is unable to act as they ought.

**Infallible:** Immune from fallacy or liability in moral judgments.

**Intellectual Infinitiveness:** Everlasting; prevails throughout life and transcends into eternity.

**Infinite:** Boundless, endless, eternal.

**Intellectual Virtues:** Includes *understanding* and *practical wisdom*. The former is essential to the assimilation of first principles and the primary axiomatic self-truths that lie at the root of all knowledge. The latter includes excellent reflection, deliberation, and calculation of what is right or wrong in determining which path you take to reach your moral destiny.

**Metaphysics:** A study of the discipline in philosophy that deals with first principles – the underlying disposition of a subject or field of inquiry. It differentiates between postulates (stipulations) and axioms (fundamental truths).

**Moral Reasoning:** Involves an understanding that our character consists of the sum of all the traits and characteristics that make up your individual personality; that your “free will” is a natural, philosophical right; that after continued repetition, virtuous acts become a permanent part of your character; and that a system of present-day and culturally evolved virtues founded on Aristotelian Ethics will help you habituate a virtuous character and compel a state of happiness.

**Moral Transgressions:** Bad acts of conduct that are rationalized as being morally accepted.

**Moral Virtues:** Refers to moral excellence, goodness, and righteousness; relates to human conduct with respect to rightness or wrongness; are governed by “free will” and free from sumptuary legislative statutes that attempt to regulate moral conduct with respect to rightness or wrongness; however, they do include law-abiding regulations, and moral virtues are not in conflict with ecclesial virtues.

**Natural Law:** that body of laws that is derived from the practical reason that helps govern human conduct and is ethically binding in human society.

**Nicomachean Ethics:** A translated collection of Aristotle's brilliant lecture notes dating back to 325 B.C. which introduced a system of classifying moral and intellectual virtues based on introspective reasoning and self-evident postulates.

**Perceived Competencies:** Is a term related to the fact that Adolescents who perceive themselves as being less competent scholastically, socially, or athletically will engage in risky behavior more frequently than adolescents who perceive themselves as being more competent.

**Perpetuations:** To preserve from distinction or oblivion.

**Pleasure:** A means to satisfy an acquired need or natural somatic (bodily) or intellectual need; an accompaniment of our sensuous and intellectual faculties; a state of being pleased or gratified.

**Postulates:** Stipulations used as a basis for reasoning; astute observations embodying a general rule, and open to question.

**Practical Wisdom:** The practice of deliberating and choosing to perform virtuous acts of conduct and avoiding flawed acts of conduct.

**Pre-Children Virtues:** Those virtues relevant to the pre-children period of family development.

**Pre-Nuptial Virtues:** Those virtues relevant to the pre-nuptial period of family development.

**Present-Day Virtues:** Postulated virtues that have culturally evolved from Aristotle's original system of virtues.

**Purpose in Life:** Aristotle posits that man's (human's) purpose in life in the pursuit of happiness; because it meets the criteria of Universality and Intellectual Infinitiveness.

**Pursuit of Happiness:** A desire satisfied by the conscious practice of consummating the intellectual and moral virtues.

**3-R's of Learning:** Relevancy, readiness, and responsibility represent the enlightenment maximums essential to the art and science of effective teaching.

**Resting Metabolic Rate (RMR):** The amount of calories that the cells of your body organs burn at rest.

**Sarcopenia:** A loss of muscle tissue and strength associated with aging.

**Self-Evident Truths:** Philosophical truths derived by empirical evidence and deductive reasoning.

**Sibling Adolescent Period:** the period wherein parents need to counter the encroachment of negative prevailing cultures.

**Sibling Young Adults, In-Laws, and Parental Retirement Virtues:** The period wherein the virtue of parental respect is significantly relevant to development of virtuous family.

**Somatic:** A synonym for the term bodily.

**Sumptuary:** Legislative statutes that attempt to regulate moral behavior.

**Treatise:** A literary composition dealing with a formal subject.

**Theological Virtues:** Virtues willed by a special grace of God.

**Universality:** Accepted by all cultures, societal entities, and individuals.

**Vice of Deficit:** A vice that falls to the extreme of a golden mean virtue.

**Vice of Excess:** A vice that falls to the other extreme of a golden mean virtue.

**Vices of Extreme:** Vices of excess and deficit that fall to the extremes of a golden mean virtue.

**Virtue:** Consists of moral virtues and intellectual virtues. Virtues are evolved from societal norms and represent righteous conduct and moral excellence.

**Vita Nuova:** "New Life," proclaimed by Dante when he met his true love Beatrice in the classic *Dante's Inferno*.