

# Character development: how we enable student self-discovery in a high-school context

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*Supporting and developing talents conference*

# It all started with values...

We want to contribute to developing young people with the potential to grow into shapers who will demonstrate ...

- **Ethics:** stemming from the belief in the worth of an individual, a set of moral principles based on moral *courage, respect and humility*
- **Excellence:** a holistic personality exceptional in one or two areas fueled *by inner drive, curiosity, and resilience*
- **Entrepreneurial leadership:** a drive for improvement powered by *high aspirations, initiative and risk taking, and inspiring others*
- **Engagement (civic):** a commitment to improve one's community based on *gratitude, care for others, and local heart, interest in the region and global mindset.*

...Regardless of their socio-economic background

# What does Character Development dept. do?

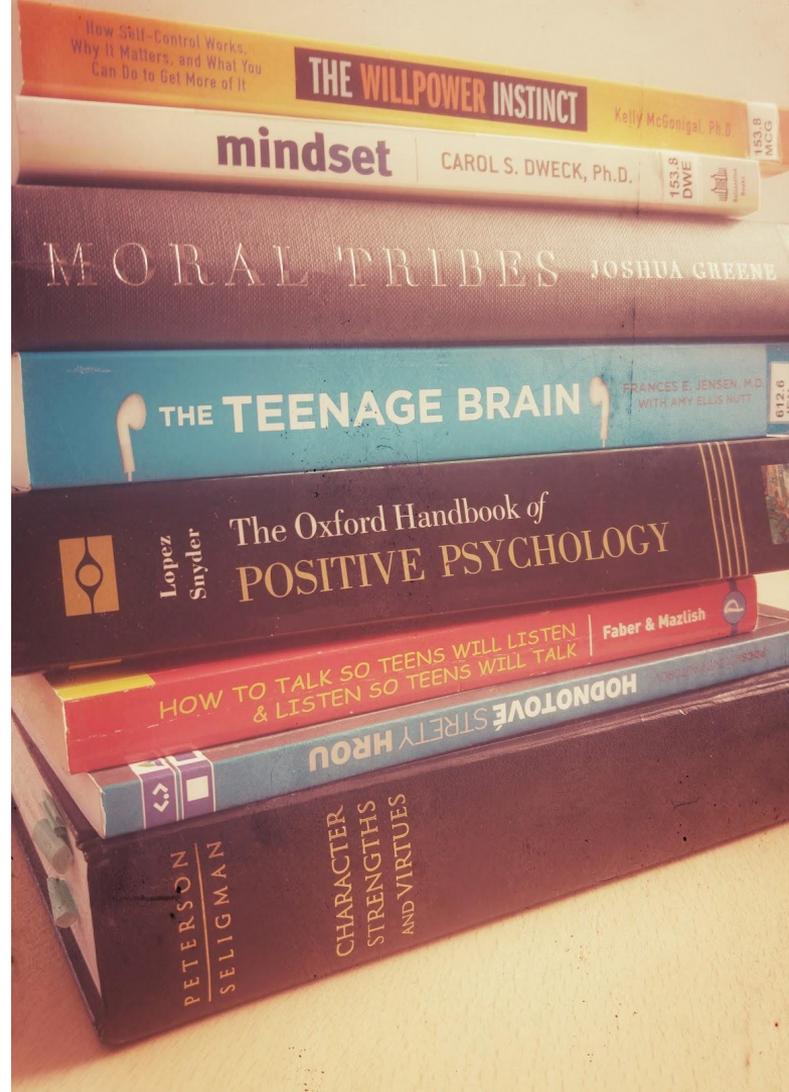
- Advisory
- Self-Discovery Seminar
- Well-being program & Community Counsellor
- “Life after LEAF” university counselling programme
- Connecting with all Departments & Residential
- Seminal Readings

## Advisory structure

- **Families** of 4-5 students
- Family head is **Advisor**, follows his/her kids progress throughout
- Language, gender and geo **diversity**
- Always from the same class (**peers**) for continuity of experience

# How do we develop character?

- Inspired by **positive education**
- **Whole school** approach (“Staffulty”)
- **Modelling** (starts with English, goes all the way to Moral Courage)
- **Mentoring** the students as appropriate (advisor, club leader, team facilitator)
- **“Caught moments”**
- **Observing** student behavior (and sharing that info with them appropriately)



# How do we enable self-discovery?

## Self-awareness building

- Mindsets
- Experientials
- Reflection
- Vocabulary
- Feedback (how I see you vs. how you see you)

## Building on your strengths

- Help them identify!
- Ask not “What do you need to improve” but “How can you use your strengths to grow?”

## Innovative assessment

Narrative is important!

- Not yet
- Emerging understanding/behaviour
- Competent
- Exceeds Expectations

# Is there something here that you can implement?

- **Positive education** movement has lots of resources for self-discovery
- **Growth mindset** - of students and staff
- If possible, **enlist colleagues** to help with their observations
- There is **thirst** from the talented kids for these topics (but they may not be used to (self-)reflection)
- Help kids discover (and form?) their **values** - it will help them have a clearer idea of what they want to do in the future (or DON'T want!)
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# Thank you

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# Our 4E values

## Values/Qualities

### Ethics

- Display **moral courage**, act honestly and stand up for what you think is right
- Treat others with **respect**, seek value in points of view of others
- Act with **humility**, acknowledge both your strengths and limitations

### Excellence

- Discover **inner drive**, act based on your own motivation
- Demonstrate **curiosity**, a genuine love of learning
- Be **resilient**, persevere in the face of setbacks and ambiguity

### Entrepreneurial leadership

- **Aspire high** and believe in possibility of achieving big dreams
- **Take risks and initiative**, challenge the status quo and pursue new opportunities
- **Inspire others**, believe in the power of teamwork

### Engagement (civic)

- Show **gratitude**, appreciate even the small things in life
- **Care for others** in and outside of one's circle
- Simultaneously demonstrate local heart, interest in the region, global mindset

**Self-awareness**, aspiring to know oneself, including own strengths and limitations, interests, causes and values.

# What are the goals of the Advisory program? Why are we doing this?

- 4Es (& 4Cs) and self-awareness development
- Support the student as a whole person
- Provide a trusted adult presence in every student's life
- Provide each student with a stable group of their peers in which they can share
- Provide a safe space to unwind & relax, deal with any issues that may arise, celebrate student's successes academic or personal, and process the experiences that make up the life of LEAF Academy