

Family Viewing Guide

Character and Life Skills: **Patience**

Grade Level: **3-5**

The Facts

A study, conducted at the University of California Berkeley, determined four reasons to cultivate patience:

- 1. Patient people enjoy better mental health.** Patient people tend to experience less depression and negative emotions, perhaps because they can cope better with upsetting or stressful situations. Those who are more patient toward others tend to be more hopeful and more satisfied with their lives.
- 2. Patient people are better friends and neighbors.** They tend to be more cooperative, more empathetic, more equitable, and more forgiving. Patience is linked to trust in the people and the institutions around us.
- 3. Patience helps us achieve our goals.** A survey showed that those with interpersonal patience made more progress towards their goals and were more satisfied when they achieved them compared to less patient people.
- 4. Patience is linked to good health.** Patient people are less likely to report health problems like headaches, acne flare-ups, ulcers, and pneumonia. People who exhibit impatience and irritability tend to have more health complaints and worse sleep.

Start a Conversation with Your Kids

1. What are some characteristics of a patient person?
2. Have you ever been in a situation where you had to be patient? How did you feel? Was being patient worth it in the end? Why or why not?
3. When do you feel it is most difficult to be patient? Why is it tougher in those situations? What can you do to make it easier?

Advice from the Experts

Scholastic gives the following advice to parents on teaching patience to their children:

- 1. Model patience.** Instead of acting anxious when you're stuck in traffic, put in relaxing CD, for example. Your child is learning from your words and body language.
- 2. Use reflective listening.** In the checkout line you might say, "I know it's hard to wait. This is taking a long time, but you're doing a great job waiting." If you acknowledge your child's struggle, they'll naturally try harder.
- 3. Help them develop strategies for waiting.** When you must wait, help your child figure out what they can do to pass the time. Say, "What can we do while we're waiting? Should we play a game or talk about something?"
- 4. Use a timer to help your child visualize the wait.** If they are begging you to do something, but you need time to finish what you're doing, set a timer for 5 minutes and tell them that you will do what they want when the bell rings.