

## Virtue Note

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KINDNESS

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Kindness is a good natured combination of sympathy, compassion, sweetness, and love, that is often expressed in the form of assistance or comfort. A kindhearted person consistently and thoughtfully considers the feelings and needs of others so that he may meet specific needs, provide useful services, or in some way extend to others gentle and soothing relief from the difficulties of daily living. Kindness is usually offered by people who give because it is their nature, and who thus seek nothing in return— people who are ever willing to make personal sacrifices and endure adversity to contribute the highest good to the greatest number of people. A kindhearted person also carefully considers the consequences of his kind intentions first, so that he may provide appropriate or practical encouragement or support without causing needless annoyance, further difficulties, or additional distress to others who are already struggling. A kindhearted person with Perfect Faith in God's Omnipresence— and thus no need for the fruits or consequences of His Actions— is a Spiritually Enlightened Being, an instrument of God's Wisdom, Love, and Peace.

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COURTESY

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Courtesy is politeness and good manners practiced regularly as a form of kindness, respect, and reverence for others. A courteous person knows what is appropriate conduct in all the different circumstances of his daily routine. He is polite when greeting others, thoughtful in arranging appointments, and natural in his gratitude and appreciation for the kindness and special skills of others. When in unfamiliar surrounding, a courteous person is careful and cautious, so as not to disturb the sensitive feelings others may have involving situations beyond his personal experience and understanding. When no appropriate advice is available in such unfamiliar surroundings, a courteous person relies on his intuition and common sense in determining the most considerate and responsible course of action. When a courteous person becomes aware that God is Present Everywhere, in All Names and All Forms, his naturally occurring and consistent courtesy in manners and speech will help assure others of his heartfelt concern for their comfort, happiness, and inner peace.

COURTESY

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## RESPONSIBILITY

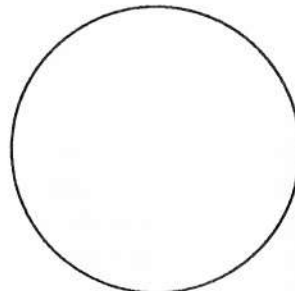
A responsible person is one who can be trusted to carry out difficult or exacting duties, faithfully manage supplies and resources, delegate authority wisely, and be reliable and practical in reacting to emergencies and other unforeseen adversity. Truly speaking, one's duties extend beyond the boundaries of one's personal needs, and encompass all basic and highly evolved responsibilities to oneself and others that contribute to the highest good in the home, and in the community. With such duties in mind, the responsible person respects authority, and is conscientious and consistent in observing the laws and customs that represent appropriate and moral behaviour. A responsible person thus encourages others to have faith in moral, religious, and spiritual codes of conduct by demonstrating in his own life that virtue is its own reward. Being consistent and responsible in carrying out one's duties is a way of practicing—and thus a way of becoming—Spiritual Truth.

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## COURAGE

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Courage is the quality of heart and mind that enables people to encounter difficulties, opposition, and danger with both calm assurance and fierce determination. In times of danger, a courageous person is careful and alert, so that he may be resourceful, and direct his energy wisely. He is wholeheartedly devoted to his purpose and goal, and thus determined to endure and outlast all opposition—or at least contribute his best efforts in the process. Moral Courage is the capacity to maintain a course one considers right regardless of storms of disapproval, continued criticism, and even outright condemnation. When people have unshakeable faith in Spiritual Truths, and a complete willingness to direct their entire lives to experiencing and sharing the reality of those Truths, their courage is sanctified by the Divine Motive of Kind Service dedicated to the Peace and Well-being of All. Such people are ever connected to the Current of God's Grace, ever cooperating and sharing in the very mission of the Supreme Being, and thus ever shining with Inner Peace—even in extreme adversity... because they are already experiencing the attainment of their life's purpose.

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## GRATITUDE

## Virtue Note

During the course of our lives, we all require the benefit of experiences, goods, and services from countless numbers of other people. Gratitude is a feeling of thankfulness, kindness, and goodwill directed towards a benefactor— one who has shared with us something that has helped us on our way. Gratitude may simply involve appropriate recognition of the benefactor, and a general feeling of goodwill towards All. Or gratitude may inspire a return of goods and services to a specific benefactor— or a contribution of resources and services to some good cause, as an offering to others dedicated to the memory of the initial benefactor. The initial benefactor and ever-present inspiration for All Acts of Kindness and Love is God, which is a Name given to an experience of sacred communion we can become aware of at any moment in our lives, but never completely understand. Be grateful to God. Transform yourself and your services into an offering to others dedicated with gratitude to the experience of God's ever-present Grace.

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FAITH

Faith is belief in the statements, teachings, or the human representatives of an ideal, offered by individuals or organizations, without having already verified such beliefs through personal experience. In the course of our daily lives, we consciously or unconsciously place our faith in an infinite variety of individuals and organizations. We should closely examine what we are placing our faith in— and why. Faith in moral, spiritual, and religious teachings— and the representatives of those teachings— is what inspires us to adapt such guidelines ourselves, and thus to discover for ourselves where such teachings lead... and what we ourselves know to be true. People who have Perfect Faith in God's Omnipresence will feel kinship and reverence for All Beings, and consequently will not damage the faith of anyone, in virtue and divinity. Such people will prefer to encourage others to have that faith, by demonstrating in their own lives that the responsibility, courage, resolution, abstinence, courtesy, kindness, gratitude, silence, reverence, faith, awareness, serenity, purity, wisdom, and love they cultivate in all the circumstances of their lives has made them better and more useful people.

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## RESOLUTION

To make a resolution is to consciously and decisively choose a particular line of action with a fixed goal, and then maintain that course of action with unshakeable tenacity. When a person is committed to carrying out a particular resolution, he bends all the rays of his God-given will power to direct more and more energy to the realization of his chosen goal. Such will power is not weakened by temporary difficulties or failures, or made complacent or vain by success. The resolute person simply moves forward, maintains direction as adversity is met and overcome, and continues on—ever faithful to the ultimate goal, and unwavering in his dedication to the duties and responsibilities of his present circumstances. Consequently, for the resolute person, the trials and tragedies of life can be perceived as a kind of Grace, as they require, and thus contribute to, the discovery of new skills, additional forms of cooperation, and previously unknown inner resources. When one meditates on where these discoveries were before they were discovered, one can commune with—and eventually become One with—the Source of All Thoughts, Words, and Deeds.

## RESOLUTION