

# Reputation

*Contributed by Solomon Brenner, author of Black Belt Parenting*

## Week 1

*"The way to gain a good reputation is to endeavor to be what you desire to appear."*

Socrates, ancient Greek philosopher

### Translation for Adults

If you want to be known as the person who is always there for others, then that is what you must do. If you want to be known as a leader, then you must lead. Each of us envisions how we want others to perceive our qualities and value, which shape our reputations. Others perceive you as the person you want to be, when you are that person, when you act the way you want to be. If you are in a bad mood, but you want to feel happy, then your best opportunity to be so is to act like you are happy. Even if you're not, then the conscious effort to act like you're happy will eventually make you happier.

### Translation for Kids

Your teacher will think you are the best student in class because you act like the best student in class. Your parents will think you are a big help around the house, when you prove that you are. If you want others to have a positive opinion of your character and actions, then you must act that way. If someone asks, "How are you?" then, even when you're not feeling so happy, say you are awesome. If you act awesome, even when you don't feel awesome, then your positive attitude can make you feel better.

### Class Discussion for Kids

1. What is your reputation?
2. What can you do to improve your reputation?

## Week 2

*"You can't build a reputation on what you will do."*

Henry Ford, great American industrialist and founder of The Ford Motor Company

### Translation for Adults

"I'll lose 10 pounds next year." "I'll clean the garage next weekend." "I'll finish this book tomorrow." How often do you put off your goals? Unfortunately, your goals hold little importance, when compared to the goals you've reached. If you want to go back to school and earn a degree, then go as soon as possible. Procrastination only makes it more difficult to accomplish your goals. You can't be known as a hard worker if you only intend to work hard; you must follow through with your intentions to earn that good reputation.

### Translation for Kids

Have you ever waited until the night before to finish a school project, even though you had weeks to do it? That's procrastination and it's not a good method to reach your goals. It's much harder to complete your homework, your chores and your martial arts practice at home, when you wait until the last minute. Your procrastination may start with one school project, but soon you are putting off personal goals. Don't expect people to think you are a good student, if you keep saying you will improve your grades, but they never do. Show them that you deserve an excellent reputation. Study as much as necessary to earn those higher grades.

### Class Discussion for Kids

1. How does procrastination keep you from reaching your goals?
2. Which are more important to others: the goals you've accomplished or the new goals you want to achieve?

# WORDS OF THE WEEK

MOTIVATIONAL LESSONS FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS

## Week 3

*"A good reputation is more valuable than money."*

Publilius Syrus, Assyrian writer of maxims in the 1st century BC

### Translation for Adults

If someone steals from you, you can report the theft to the police or your insurance company, with the expectation of being compensated. Whatever was stolen may never be returned to you or you never recoup its value in the form of money, but you can always make more money and probably replace what was stolen. If you lose your reputation, however, it is not so easily replaced and it is worth much more. In the business world, reputation means everything. If your company has a bad reputation, then you are unlikely to have many high quality customers. It's more important to protect your good reputation than your material possessions.

### Translation for Kids

If you lose your bike, for example, then it can be replaced. You might have to work to earn the money to pay for a new bike or wait until someone gives you a new one for your birthday. Even though you can't see it, your reputation is worth much more than having a bike for every day of the week. Your reputation is how other people view you—as a good student, hard worker, slacker or troublemaker. Your reputation is important because it can affect the way people treat you. For example, your teacher will let you run an errand for her, but only if she knows you are a trustworthy person; and that is a positive reputation. If you lose your good reputation, then it is much harder to replace than any bike.

### Class Discussion for Kids

1. Why is your reputation so important?
2. How can a bad reputation affect the way people treat you?

## Week 4

*"It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you'll do things differently."*

Warren Buffett, American investor, businessman and philanthropist and richest man in the world

### Translation for Adults

Some companies spend years building their good names. They develop a loyal base of customers that spread the good word about the company to other companies and people who might benefit from a good company's products and services. As those companies' reputations spread, business increases. If their customers aren't satisfied, however, then bad news and a bad reputation spread even more quickly than good news. The same can be said of your career. If you are trying to climb to the top of your field, then a good reputation can take you far. It can take you years to build a good reputation, but one bad move can ruin it all. For this reason, place more importance on your integrity and reputation than advancing by cutting corners.

### Translation for Kids

It can take a long time to build a good reputation. Maybe, you want to convince your parents that you are old enough to be home alone. The only way you can earn their trust is by behaving well each time they leave you alone. It may take a few years before your parents trust you when you are home alone, but if you betray that trust with bad behavior while they are gone, your reputation as a trustworthy person disappears in a blink of an eye. Now, it will take even longer to prove that you are trustworthy. This is why it is so important to take advantage of every opportunity to build a good reputation and avoid a bad one.

### Class Discussion for Kids

1. Name one quality that has given you a good reputation (Being trustworthy, being a good listener, etc.)?
2. How could your reputation be ruined?