



# STRONG character

Doing what is right even when it's hard to do.



Positive Mindset



Healthy Emotions



Successful Behaviors

A WORKBOOK FOR STUDENTS

**My Name:**

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**Ingenium:** *info@IngeniumCoach.org*

**Ingenium**  
Character. Building.



2010 Kalamazoo Avenue SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49507

616.301.3552

info@ingeniumcoach.org

*Strong Character: Doing what is right even when it's hard to do*  
*A Workbook for Students*

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Printed in the United States of America

ISBN: 978-0-9979861-2-9

Paperback

Ingenium is a nonprofit organization, originally named School-to-Career Progressions, that is based on the successful Welfare-to-Career program sponsored by Cascade Engineering.

### **Mission Statement**

Preparing students to be successful in school,  
the workforce, and the community.

Funded in part by



Heart of West Michigan  
United Way



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# STRONG CHARACTER

## Character

The way a person thinks, feels, and behaves.

## Strong Character

Doing what is right even when it's hard to do.

You **CAN** develop a strong character and succeed.

## Strong Character gives me the ability to . . .

- Control my anger.
- Work hard to reach my goal.
- Bounce back from setbacks.
- Ask for help when needed.
- Have a good attitude even when things go wrong.

**Strong Character** is more important for your success than how smart you are, how popular you are, or what other people think about you.

**Do you agree?**

Yes

No

Which of the Strong Character abilities in the list above do you like the most?

What is character?

What is strong character?

# The Three Keys to Strong Character



Complete the statements using the three keys to a Strong Character. Then select one trait under each that you believe can help you succeed.



Having a positive mindset is looking for the \_\_\_\_\_ in people and situations.

A **Positive Mindset** guides me to . . .

Stop negative thoughts

Solve problems

Have a good attitude



Having healthy emotions is \_\_\_\_\_ your feelings in positive ways.

**Healthy Emotions** help me to . . .

Control my feelings

Be in a good mood

Express myself respectfully



Having successful behaviors is practicing good \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ .

**Successful Behaviors** lead me to . . .

Reach my goals

Walk away from a conflict

Be responsible



## BRAD'S STORY

Brad is not doing well in school and got another D on a science test. He thinks he won't pass the class and is angry. Brad blames the teacher. He argued about the grade on the test, trying to get the teacher to up his grade. He was frustrated, began shouting, and was sent to the office.

**What did Brad think?**

**How did he feel?**

**What actions did he take?**

## Strong Character Skills

**Be honest, and rate yourself on how often you use these Strong Character skills.**

Let go of negative feelings and any grudges after someone wrongs you.	ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	NEVER
Focus your thoughts and pay attention even when you're bored and don't feel like it.	ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	NEVER
Walk away when asked to do something that is wrong.	ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	NEVER
Stop and think before you react to negative feelings.	ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	NEVER
Plan action steps to reach your goal.	ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	NEVER
Control your words and actions when you are mad.	ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	NEVER
Do what is right when others are doing something that is wrong.	ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	NEVER


# My Strong Character


You can develop a strong character and do what is right even when it's hard to do. Practice these **three keys to a strong character**—a **positive mindset**, **healthy emotions**, and **successful behaviors**. Work hard to improve no matter what you're going through. Set goals and do what it takes to reach them. Developing strong character takes hard work. You can do it. When you have a strong character, you will succeed.


Using this **1 - 5 scale**, rate how often you practiced these examples of a strong character, starting with Week 1.

Rate yourself each week for 6 weeks.

**1** NEVER    **2** A LITTLE    **3** SOMETIMES    **4** OFTEN    **5** ALWAYS

 <b>Positive Mindset</b> Look for the good in people and situations.	WEEKS					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
I had a good attitude about people and things.						
I showed respect to those around me.						
I used positive language.						

 <b>Healthy Emotions</b> Control your feelings in positive ways.	WEEKS					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
I controlled my anger.						
I showed people I care about them.						
I was thankful for the people in my life.						

 <b>Successful Behaviors</b> Have good actions and conduct.	WEEKS					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
I completed my assignments and work.						
I asked for help.						
I followed the rules at home and in school.						

# POSITIVE MINDSET



**Positive mindset** is looking for the good in people and situations. Looking for ways to improve helps to set your mind to be positive. Positive thinking helps you to figure out ways to solve problems and set goals. It's common to think about the mistakes we make and to say negative things, "I'm so stupid. Why did I say that?" By using positive self-talk, you can have a good attitude and gain confidence.

**Check two that will help you improve.**

A **positive mindset** will help me to . . .

Be in a  
good mood.

Think better about  
myself and others.

Work better  
with others.

Achieve  
my goals.



**STRONG CHARACTER SKILL: Positive self-talk**

**Positive self-talk** is like coaching yourself to succeed. Positive self-talk sounds like this: "I can handle this, and I am not going to get mad." When you face difficult situations, stop and think and use positive self-talk to decide on the best thing to do.

**When I am upset, I will use positive self-talk to calm myself.**

**Check how often you stop and think to say something positive to yourself.**

A little

Sometimes

A lot

**Say these three statements out loud and click the one you like the most.**

**I HAVE**  
talents and  
abilities to  
succeed.

**I WILL**  
work hard  
and  
improve.

**I SEE**  
myself  
reaching  
my goals.



## STRONG CHARACTER SKILL: Positive attitude

**Attitude** is the way you think and feel about someone or something. Your attitude affects your behavior, your relationships, and how well you do in school. When you have a negative attitude, you make decisions based on what you want instead of what is best. Choosing to have a **positive attitude** helps you to feel better and get along better with friends.

What causes you to have a bad attitude?



### HANNA'S STORY

Hanna spends a lot of time on social media. She likes meeting new people. When her parents ask if she did her homework, Hanna thinks, "They don't care if I have any friends. They make me mad." She walks out of the room without answering the question.

What negative self-talk did Hanna use?

Did she have a bad attitude?

What could she have done differently?

**I will choose to have a positive attitude.**

Check how often you choose to have a positive attitude.

A little

Sometimes

A lot

### POSITIVE MINDSET TIPS

Check one tip in each list that you will begin using.

#### POSITIVE SELF-TALK

I will say something positive to put myself in a good mood.

I will stop and think before I say anything negative.

I will use positive self-talk to encourage myself.

#### POSITIVE ATTITUDE

I will practice anger-control steps.

I will ask for help whenever I need it.

I will pick friends who have a positive attitude.

Which positive mindset tip will help you "do what is right even when it's hard to do"?

# CONFIDENCE

Confidence is a feeling or belief that you can do something well and succeed. Everyone has positive and negative thoughts. The negative thoughts can lead to poor behaviors. The good news is that you can change your way of thinking, do better, and gain more confidence. Being confident helps you to do what is right even when it's hard to do.

## Negative thoughts can lead us to not try our best and even to give up.

Select how often your negative thoughts stop you from doing your best.

A little

Sometimes

A lot

Check the negative thought that kills your confidence.

NEGATIVE THOUGHTS	CONFIDENCE KILLERS	POOR OUTCOMES
It was all for nothing	I studied really hard and I still failed. I don't care anymore.	You don't try as hard the next time, and you fail the class.
Negative self-talk	I'm so stupid. Why did I do that?	You won't give yourself a chance to succeed.
Making comparisons	He's way better at this than I am.	You can't see your talents because you're looking at everyone else's.

## Alicia's Story

The middle school talent show is seeking students to perform. Alicia signs up to sing and starts practicing her song. She works really hard. Then she hears that Robin will be singing.



### CONFIDENCE KILLERS

**Mindset:** "Robin sings so much better than I do. Everyone will like her song and not mine."

**Emotions:** Alicia is nervous, worried, and anxious.

**Behavior:** At the talent show, Alicia gets scared watching the other students show off their talents. She lacks confidence. She is so nervous, she decides not to perform.

What is Alicia's confidence killer?

Think of a time when negative feelings kept you from enjoying something.

# Building Your Confidence

Everyone who succeeds has also experienced mistakes and failures. But they learned to see each setback as an opportunity to do better the next time. You can train your brain to focus on positive thoughts that build your confidence.

**Positive thoughts can lead to positive actions and better outcomes.**

Check the positive thought that builds your confidence.

POSITIVE THOUGHTS	CONFIDENCE BUILDERS	SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES
Remember past goals and successes	Make a list of your past goals and achievements.	Remembering your achievements creates positive thoughts.
Stay calm	Stop, take a deep breath, and control your emotions.	Controlling your fear and other negative emotions helps you to reach your goals.
Use positive self-talk	I got this! I've been practicing all month and will perform better.	Saying positive things to yourself makes you believe in yourself.

## Same story. Different outcome.

The middle school talent show is seeking students to perform. Alicia signs up to sing and starts practicing her song. She works really hard. Then she hears that Robin will be singing.



### CONFIDENCE BUILDERS

- Mindset:** "I've been practicing. I need to stay calm, think positive, and do my best. I can do this. It'll be great!"
- Emotions:** Alicia is excited, proud, and enthusiastic.
- Behavior:** At the talent show, Alicia makes only two mistakes in her song. She gets wild applause and is proud of herself.

Why do you think Alicia is happy even though she made two mistakes?

What was her confidence builder?

What Positive Thought will you use to do what is right even when it's hard to do?

# HEALTHY EMOTIONS



Having **healthy emotions** means controlling feelings in positive ways. When your emotions cause you to do something you regret, you can have big problems. You can learn to **stop** before you do something negative and to use emotional control steps to **respond** in positive ways.



## STRONG CHARACTER BELIEFS

Fill in the blanks using the bold words in the paragraph.

I **HAVE** the ability to have \_\_\_\_\_.

I **WILL** improve by learning to \_\_\_\_\_ before I do something negative.

I **SEE** myself choosing to \_\_\_\_\_ in positive ways.



## STRONG CHARACTER SKILL: Control emotions

**When you learn to control your emotions, you respond in positive ways.**

Check how often you control your emotions when you are mad or sad.

A little

Sometimes

A lot

When you're upset and facing a difficult situation, give yourself time to stop and use one of the emotional control steps in the following list.

### EMOTIONAL CONTROL STEPS

Check one emotional control step you will use when you are having a hard time.

Take a deep breath and count to 10.

Stop and think before you react.

Know that negative emotions don't last forever.

Use positive self-talk.

Think of someone who makes you happy.

Laugh it off.



## STRONG CHARACTER SKILL: Identify your anger

### I can identify my anger and calm myself down.

Check how often you identify your anger when you are mad.

A little

Sometimes

A lot

Check what makes you angry.

A classmate lies about me.

Someone ignores me.

I am told to do something I don't like to do.

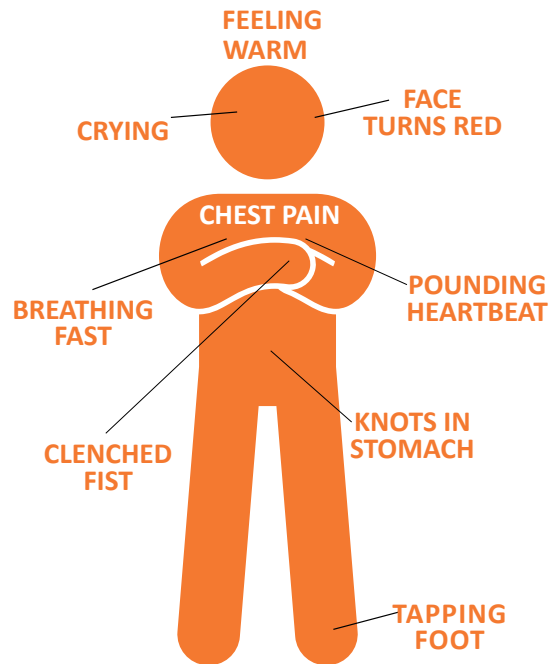
A friend calls me a name.

I am accused of something I did not do.

Someone disrespects me.

I don't know the answer to a question.

Check the signs you experience when you get angry.



## Be thankful

Being thankful helps you to see all the good in your life and to be grateful for what you have. When someone does something nice for you, it is important to not take their kindness for granted. Say, "Thank you." Being thankful helps you to have a positive attitude.

Check the things that you are thankful for.

Family

Music

My best friend

Sports

My pet

## WAYS TO SHOW THANKS

Check one way that you can express your thanks.

Help someone who has helped you.

Smile.

Say, "Thank you."

Tell others how much you care about them.

# EMOTIONAL CONTROL

Emotions help you to know how you feel about something you like or something you don't like. Sometimes it's hard to get things done when you are disappointed or when you're in a bad mood. A good way to improve your mood is to identify what put you in a bad mood. Then figure out what you can do about it. Emotional control is choosing to have a good attitude and practicing successful behaviors.

---

## Check what makes you feel disappointed or puts you in a bad mood.



When people don't understand me and I feel judged.

When I get a bad grade on an assignment or test.

When I am sick or tired.

Other:

---

## Check the ways you react when you feel disappointed or are in a bad mood.



Don't complete assignments at school.

Say negative things about myself.

Won't talk to people who care about me.

Raise my voice.

Participate in activities I shouldn't do.

Disrespect adults and my friends.

Ignore my responsibilities.

Other:

Select the one response you do most often.

---

## Check behaviors you can practice when you feel disappointed or are in a bad mood.



Talk to friends and family who will listen.

Sing a song that makes me happy.

Read a book, write, or draw.

Do positive things I enjoy.

Let go and forgive what is bothering me.

Participate in a sport I like.

Listen to music or dance.

Other:

Select the one habit you will practice to improve your mood.

When I am disappointed, I will

## Communicating your feelings

**"I" statements** start with the word **"I"** and tell others how you are feeling. **"You" statements** start with the word **"you"** and can offend others and make problems worse. I statements sound like this: "I felt embarrassed when you laughed at me in class today." Let someone know in a respectful way that their actions have upset you.

**Communicate your emotions using "I" statements that don't threaten or accuse others.**

### MICHAEL'S STORY

Michael is in a bad mood. During math class, he tried to ask about his homework. But the teacher didn't see him. He got very upset and told the teacher, "You never help me! You do it on purpose!" He shoved his homework in his backpack, went back to his seat, and didn't participate for the rest of the class.



What **"I"** statement could Michael have used?

I feel

when you

Complete the **"I"** statements using these **FEELING WORDS**.

**FEELING WORDS** Angry Disappointed Upset Sad Hurt Frustrated

**"You" statement** "You never text me back. You always ignore me!"

**"I" statement** "I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when you don't text me back."

**"You" statement** "You talk too much. I can't tell you anything!"

**"I" statement** "I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when you won't listen to me."

**"You" statement** "You always laugh at me. You think you're better than me."

**"I" statement** "I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when you make fun of me and laugh."

## Positive communication

Check the benefits of positive communication that are most important to you.

I can share my thoughts and feelings.

I can disagree without hurting others.

I can encourage others to do what's right.

I can forgive someone and move on.

I can show my respect for others.

I can control my feelings.

# SUCCESSFUL BEHAVIORS



Your behavior is how you treat others and how you act, especially when things go wrong. **Successful behaviors** are good actions and conduct. Be **responsible** for your actions and do what is right. **Plan ahead** and complete what's important first. When you choose successful behaviors, you are developing a strong character.



## STRONG CHARACTER BELIEFS

Fill in the blanks using the bold words in the paragraph.

I **HAVE** the ability to develop \_\_\_\_\_.

I **WILL** choose to \_\_\_\_\_ and do what's important first.

I **SEE** myself being \_\_\_\_\_ and doing what is right.



## STRONG CHARACTER SKILL: Plan ahead

**When you plan ahead you reach your goals.**

Select how often you plan ahead so you can improve.

A little

Sometimes

A lot

Match the "When I" statement with the "Then I will" statement by putting the correct letter in the blank circle.

WHEN I	THEN I WILL
<input type="radio"/> A Ask for help	<input type="radio"/> Organize and turn in assignments.
<input type="radio"/> B Forget my assignment	<input type="radio"/> Focus by taking notes and asking questions.
<input type="radio"/> C Have a bad attitude	<input type="radio"/> Practice positive self-talk.
<input type="radio"/> D Get bored in class	<input type="radio"/> Use emotional control steps.
<input type="radio"/> E Get mad about things I don't like	<input type="radio"/> Understand what I need to do.



**I can work hard to take care of my responsibilities.**

Check how often you complete your responsibilities.

A little

Sometimes

A lot

**3 STEPS TO TAKING RESPONSIBILITY**

Excuses keep us from taking responsibility for our actions. These three steps are necessary for you to take responsibility.

Check the step that you are strongest in.



Which of these steps is hardest for you to do? .

Read the successful behaviors and check how often you do each.  
Describe how you will practice each behavior.

SUCCESSFUL BEHAVIORS	How often do you do this?	Pick how you will practice successful behavior.
<b>Control My Behavior</b> I stop and think before I say or do anything.	Never Sometimes Always	
<b>Show Respect</b> I treat others the same way I want to be treated.	Never Sometimes Always	
<b>Follow Directions</b> I follow directions and rules at home and at school.	Never Sometimes Always	



# STRONG character



Brad is upset. He's waiting for the principal to see him. He feels warm, angry. "I hate that teacher," he thought. "I deserved a B on the test. I'm not going to pass science no matter what I do."

In the office, the principal said, "Come in, Brad. Have a seat. What's going on?" When Brad didn't answer, he said, "**Take a few deep breaths**, then tell me what happened."

Brad was looking down and tapping one foot on the floor. He complained about the teacher and the D he got on the last test. "I don't get the assignments. They're stupid."

"From the looks of it, your grades and behavior could use some work," the principal said. "Would you be willing to stay after school to talk with the teacher and get some help with your homework?"

Brad shrugged, his eyes now focused on his shoes. "I'll think about it."

**When things got hard for Brad, did he do what was right?** Yes No



**POSITIVE MINDSET**

What type of self-talk did Brad use?	Positive	Negative
What was Brad's mindset and attitude?	Positive	Negative
Brad tapping his foot and feeling warm is a sign of what?		



**HEALTHY EMOTIONS**

What emotional control step did the principal suggest?		
Did Brad take responsibility for his actions or make excuses?		
Did Brad plan how he could improve?	Yes	No



**SUCCESSFUL BEHAVIORS**

Explain.

What's going to happen to Brad?

# STRONG CHARACTER REVIEW

Strong character is doing what is right even when it's hard to do. When you have a strong character, you use the different skills you learned to control your thinking, your feelings, and your behavior. Complete these activities to see how much you remember.



**Strong character** is doing what is \_\_\_\_\_ even when it's \_\_\_\_\_ to do.



## POSITIVE MINDSET

Having a positive mindset is looking for the \_\_\_\_\_ in people and situations.

Which strong character skill from pages 6 and 7 will you use to improve your mindset?



## HEALTHY EMOTIONS

Having healthy emotions is \_\_\_\_\_ your feelings in positive ways.

List two emotional control steps from page 10 that you will start practicing.

- 1.
- 2.

Having successful behaviors is practicing good \_\_\_\_\_

and \_\_\_\_\_.

What are the three steps to taking responsibility listed on page 15?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Describe what you will do to show that you have strong character.



## SUCCESSFUL BEHAVIORS

# GOALS

What is important to you? Playing on a sports team? Earning better grades? Having good friends? Set a goal for what you want to achieve. A short-term goal is one you can get done in a week or a month. A long-term goal will take a year or more.

Use these three steps when you set a goal:

1. **See** yourself reaching your goal.
2. **Focus** on what you need to stop doing and what you need to start doing to improve.
3. **Plan** three action steps you will use to reach your goal.

Fill in the blanks using the bold words in the paragraph.



## JASMINE'S STORY

Hi, my name is Jasmine. This year I want to do better in school. My grades are terrible. I need to **start** working hard and **stop** complaining and wasting time.

**My goal** is to raise all my grades to B or even A. Going to college is my long-term goal. To get better grades, I **plan** to study more and turn in all my assignments on time. When I don't understand an assignment, I will ask the teacher for help. I know I can do this.

**Read Jasmine's story.**

What **goal** did she set?

What will Jasmine **start** doing?

What will she **stop** doing?

List the action steps in her **plan**.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

# YOUR GOAL ROAD MAP



## GOAL

Set a long-term goal you want to achieve.

Use these **THREE STEPS** to help you reach your goal.

### 1. SEE

See yourself reaching your goal. Check how you will feel.

- Good
- Smart
- Self-confident
- Encouraged
- Determined to succeed



### 2. FOCUS

What behavior do you need to **start doing** to improve?

What behavior do you need to **stop doing**?



### 3. PLAN

List three action steps you need to practice to achieve your goal.



GOAL REACHED

- 1
- 2
- 3

# EVERYONE

is born with  
talents and abilities  
to succeed,

*but you also need*

## STRONG CHARACTER

*to*

## REACH YOUR GOALS

Do you agree?

Yes

No



## SHAWN'S GOAL

Shawn has a temper. When he gets angry, he says and does things he wishes later he hadn't done. After mouthing off to a teacher, he was suspended.

His parents asked him what he could do to improve. He set this goal:

"I will control my anger 3 days a week."

He made a list of things he can do that will help him control his anger.

These are his action steps:

1. Walk away.
2. Take 3 deep breaths.
3. Laugh it off.

### 1 Shawn's goal

What is Shawn's goal?

### 2 Shawn's confidence

Shawn felt confident he could control his anger and reach his goal. On this **Confidence Scale**, he rated his confidence at 8.



### 3 Shawn's three action steps

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### 4 Shawn's progress

#### Goal Achievement Worksheet

HOW I DID		WEEKS			
		1	2	3	4
Much better than goal	7 days a week				*
Better than goal	5 days a week			*	
<b>GOAL</b>	<b>Control my anger 3 days a week</b>		*		
Current behavior	2 days a week				
Worse behavior	1 day a week	*			

Each week, Shawn used this **Goal Achievement Worksheet** to track his short-term goal.

Week 1 was bad. He couldn't control his anger.

Week 2 he practiced his action steps and reached his new behavior—his goal.

Week 3 was even better.

Week 4, Shawn was able to control his anger every day.

Shawn achieved his goal.

# 1 Set your goal

Now it's time for you to set a school goal. Follow these four steps.

## 1 Set a school goal

I will get to every class on time 3 days a week.

I will finish all assignments 3 days a week.

I will study at least 20 minutes a day 3 days a week.

I will respectfully follow directions at school 3 days a week.

I will control my anger 3 days a week.

I will walk away from an argument or fight 3 days a week.

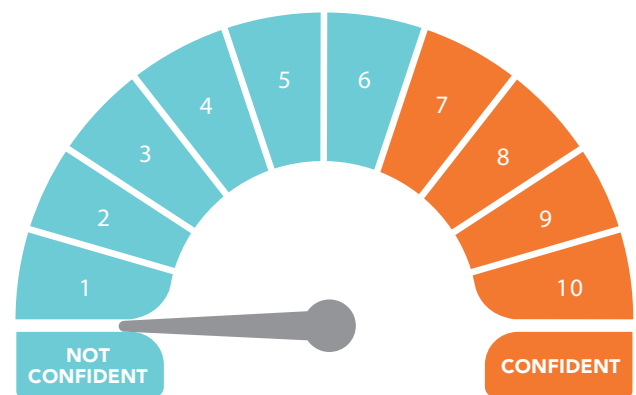
I will ask for help in class 3 days a week.

## MY GOAL

## 2 Rate your self-confidence

How confident do you feel about reaching your goal? Be honest.

Rate yourself on a scale from **1-10**. \_\_\_\_



## CONFIDENCE

If your score is between **1-6**, do you know someone who can help you?

Or you might want to pick another goal, and that's OK.

If your number is between **7-10**, you feel confident.

You know you can reach your goal.

With each goal you reach, you gain confidence.

### 3 Plan your action steps

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### 4 Track your progress

1. Next to the word **GOAL** is the goal you set on page 22
2. Next to **BELOW GOAL**, pick a number that is below your goal.
3. Next to **WORSE**, pick a number for behavior that is much worse than the goal.
4. In the second space from the top, list behavior that is **BETTER** than the goal.
5. At the top, list behavior that is **MUCH BETTER** than your goal.

		WEEKS						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
	Much better than goal	days a week						
	Better than goal	days a week						
	<b>GOAL</b>							
	Current behavior	days a week						
	Worse behavior	days a week						

For the next six weeks, **track your progress** on a Goal Achievement Worksheet. Click the square that matches your performance for each week. See Shawn’s progress on page 21.

To **download and print** a Goal Achievement Worksheet, go to [www.ingeniumcoach.org](http://www.ingeniumcoach.org).

# My Strong Character Plan

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You can develop a strong character and do what is right even when it's hard to do. Developing strong character takes determination. Work hard to improve no matter what you're going through. You will succeed. You can do it.

**I HAVE talents and abilities to succeed.**

**I WILL work hard and improve.**

**I SEE myself reaching my goals.**

## Practicing Strong Character

---



### Positive Mindset

Look for the good in people and situations.

I will

I will



### Healthy Emotions

Control your feelings in positive ways.

I will

I will



### Successful Behaviors

Have good actions and conduct.

I will

I will

I will

Print pages 24 and 25.

Each time you **do what is right even when it's hard to do**, you build the **strong character skills** you need to succeed.

# My Strong Character Goal

## The Goal

## Action Steps

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## My Weekly Progress

Goal Achievement Worksheet		WEEKS					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
 Much better than goal	<input type="checkbox"/> days a week						
 Better than goal	<input type="checkbox"/> days a week						
 <b>GOAL</b>							
 Current behavior	<input type="checkbox"/> days a week						
 Worse behavior	<input type="checkbox"/> day a week						

Track your progress on this Goal Achievement Worksheet. Mark an X in the square that matches how you did each week. Discuss any problems with a parent or a teacher.

# REFERENCES

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