

# **POWERFUL WORDS**



**CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT**

THE ULTIMATE CHARACTER  
DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

**BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL FUTURE  
ONE STUDENT AT A TIME!!!**



# SELF RELIANCE

**Self Reliance means, “I can do it  
by myself!”**

**Self Reliance means self trust;  
relying on your own judgments,  
powers or abilities.**

## SELF RELIANCE

**Young students:** I can do it by myself!

**Older students/teens/adults:** Self trust; relying on your own judgments, powers, or abilities.

**WEEK 1** Self reliance defined: What can I do by myself? What new things can I try?

**WEEK 2** Becoming more self reliant: What helps or hinders self reliance?

**WEEK 3** Try, try again: When should we try again and when should we ask for help?

**WEEK 4** What does self reliance say about me? What are my self reliance goals?

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*Dear Family,*

This month we will focus on the powerful word; “self reliance.”

Self reliance is all about a balancing act; knowing how much to help in order to build confidence and when to let go to build independence. We want to give children enough freedom to encourage exploration and critical thinking without pushing them too fast that they lose their footing. Allowing your children to take on new responsibilities takes gauging their abilities and readiness. In addition, it takes a little bit of trial, error, and faith.

Self-reliance is also about self trust. It’s the ability to rely on our own powers, judgments, and abilities. A child who is self reliant is able to think for himself and trust his instincts. He shows independence and competence. He uses his

resources to cope with new situations or circumstances that challenge him. With the development of self reliance, your child will trust that he can do it by himself even if it takes longer or it’s a bit challenging. He may even make mistakes.

Of course, it can be difficult to watch a child make mistakes. Stepping back can be a challenge for both parents and teachers. Still, it’s necessary. As our Child Development Specialist Dr. Robyn Silverman, has said, “Self Reliance is a masterful teacher. It encourages trial and error. The greatest lessons learned often come from one’s own mistakes.”

Building self-reliance takes a partnership between the child, the parent, and other important adults in the child’s life. Let’s face it; it’s often easier, quicker, and more skillfully done if we do it for the child. But when

we allow him to accomplish a developmentally appropriate task on his own, he gains confidence and learns that he can do it by himself.

As always, one of the best ways to teach and reinforce Powerful Words is by modeling strength of character ourselves. We can show our children that we can depend on ourselves for many things- whether fixing something in the home or doing challenging tasks for work.

We thank you for your support. You are pivotal in helping to make our school one of the best personal development centers in the world.

Best Regards,  
—*Your Motivated and  
Dedicated Instructors*

### UPCOMING POWERFUL WORDS

**OCTOBER** Diligence

**NOVEMBER** Generosity

**DECEMBER** Acceptance

## SELF RELIANCE

**Young students:** I can do it by myself!

**Older students/teens/adults:** Self trust; relying on your own judgments, powers, or abilities.

*Dear Dr. Robyn,*

I've always been one of those parents who is a little more protective than most. Now that my children are older, I'm starting to see that they may be a little too dependant on me...how can I help them to be more independent and self-reliant (without pushing them too far, too fast?)?

-- Jo B., Vancouver, BC

*Dear Jo B.,*

As our children get older, we hope that they can rely more on their own skills and judgments. However, if they are used to someone doing things for them, they may be less apt to try things on their own even if we believe they would be successful if they did.

So what should we do to build self reliance in our children?

**(1) Get honest with yourself:** Before stepping in, ask yourself; Do they really need my help or do I just want to feel needed? Do they need me to assist them or simply support and encourage them? As parents and mentors we only want to step in when we are really needed.

**(2) Help them to set an independent goal:** What is something that they would like to be able to do on their own but may be too nervous or worried to try? Help them to set an appropriate goal that is a little challenging

but still within their reach. Once attained, encourage them to set and get another one!

**(3) Wait:** Before stepping in, take a moment. Breathe. Children need to struggle a little bit in order to learn and grow. If it's always easy or done for them, they don't learn the skills they need to operate on their own. They may make mistakes and it may not be done exactly right the first time. That's OK! Allow them to make mistakes so they can learn that each one is only a stepping stone to ultimate success.

**(4) Ask questions rather than supplying the answers:** When your children ask you to solve a problem for them or take over when they get a little frustrated, refrain from being the solution. Instead, ask them, "What can you try now? Where can you find that answer? Help them exercise their own critical thinking and show them that they often have the answer if they just try a little harder or do things a little

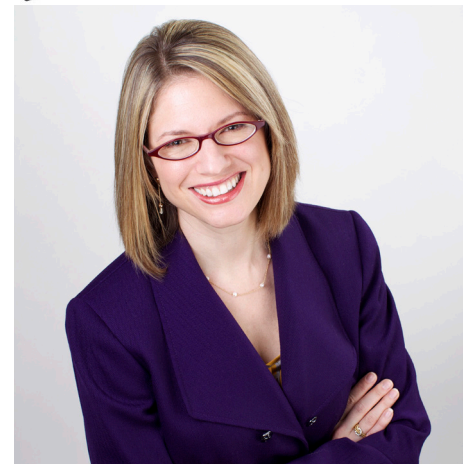
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<< Paraphrased from a social media comment; with permission

differently.

**(5) Review their successes:** Remind your children of how far they've come. Praise them for taking healthy risks, trying something on their own, and being persistent. Even mistakes, in the pursuit of learning, can be saluted as they are part of becoming self reliant. Your children will be excited that you noticed and will likely want to do more!

**Here's to your success!**



# SELF RELIANCE

FIRST & LAST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Self Reliance means "I can do it by myself!" When we try new things, it can take time and practice before we get it right. Many times we must "try, try again!" Other times, we need to ask for help. Look at our friends below. Should they "try, try again," should they ask someone for help, or should they quit? Circle what you think is the right answer.



Coco is learning how to play a new song. She is making a lot of mistakes. She feels frustrated.

Try, try again!

Ask for help!

Quit!



Max tried to read his book for class. Now he wants to play instead. He wants his father to read the book for him.

Try, try again!

Ask for help!

Quit!



Robbie loves to pretend that he's a chef. Today he really turns the stove on when his parents are in another room.

Try, try again!

Ask for help!

Quit!



Mozi ran a race. He didn't win. Now, he is supposed to run in another race. He's nervous. He wonders if he should quit.

Try, try again!

Ask for help!

Quit!

What is something that you have tried to do all by yourself? \_\_\_\_\_

What is something you would like to learn how to do all by yourself? \_\_\_\_\_

# SELF RELIANCE

FIRST & LAST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

## 20 Quick Questions

Think about how self reliance applies to you. Answer, circle, or rank the quick questions below. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers!

- (1) What is the last thing you learned to do by yourself? \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) What is something you are learning to do by yourself now? \_\_\_\_\_
- (3) When you show self reliance, how does it make you feel? \_\_\_\_\_
- (4) Who cheers for you when you try things on your own? \_\_\_\_\_
- (5) When you need to "try, try again" how do you feel? \_\_\_\_\_
- (6) Where do you feel most comfortable trying new things? \_\_\_\_\_
- (7) Who looks up to you when you show self reliance? \_\_\_\_\_
- (8) Who do you encourage to try things on their own? \_\_\_\_\_
- (9) What is something you learned to do that you are most proud of? \_\_\_\_\_
- (10) What were you most excited about learning how to do? \_\_\_\_\_

### Rank it! (On a scale from 1 to 5, circle your answer)

How would you rank....	Low	In the middle	High
(11) Your overall self reliance?	1	2 3	4 5
(12) Your self reliance at home?	1	2 3	4 5
(13) Your self reliance at school?	1	2 3	4 5
(14) Your self reliance here in our class?	1	2 3	4 5
(15) Your fear of doing things on your own?	1	2 3	4 5
(16) Your desire to try new things?	1	2 3	4 5
(17) Your commitment to keep trying after you fail?	1	2 3	4 5
(18) How excited you are when you reach your goals?	1	2 3	4 5

(19) Do you often "try try, again?" YES

NO

(20) Do you often succeed when you "try, try again?" YES

NO

