

Instructor Name

Course

Date

Integrity

Considering my various opinions on morality and the ethical code of living life, a core value that binds them all together is integrity. I believe that integrity in a person is the most attractive quality possible. My parents deserve the credit for integrating this value into my personality so strongly. In both my personal and professional lives, I try to uphold integrity because I view it as a very admirable characteristic of a person. Even though I know that people cannot be morally perfect, I think that integrity brings them very close to moral perfection. My belief that integrity makes or breaks morality in a person was recently heightened when a financially strained man decided to deliver my dropped wallet after I mistakenly left it in his cab.

Last Monday was a very long day for me as I had had an especially taxing day at work. A report had gone missing, and instead of taking responsibility for the mistake, all my colleagues had spent the entire day tossing around blame and finding ways to exonerate themselves. Angry from these encounters and tired from a sleepless night, I sat in a cab to go home. When I paid the cab driver the fare and rushed to get out so I could eat dinner and sleep my anger away, my wallet somehow fell in the cab without my noticing. I dragged myself upstairs and decided to order pizza before showering. The brief minutes under the shower had barely rejuvenated me when the doorbell rang. I knew the pizza was here, so I absentmindedly rummaged through my bag to get my wallet. It was not there. Before I began to panic, I tried to take a deep breath and dumped the contents of my bag on my bed. There was no wallet.

My bad day had gone from bad to worse. Holding back tears over the effort it would take to cancel all my cards and make new ones, I found cash to pay for pizza and began to make my way back to my room with my dinner. I knew I was going to have a long crying session that night. A voice behind me startled me before I had reached the door.

“Ma’am! Does this belong to you?”

I turned around and blinked at a middle-aged, stout man waving something at me. When the tears blurring my vision subsided, I saw, to my great surprise, that he was holding my wallet.

“My kid found this on the backseat, and since I dropped you here an hour ago, I figured I should bring it back here. Is it yours?”

“Yes,” I managed to say in a voice thickened with emotion. “Yes, it is mine.”

“Here,” he said as he handed the wallet to me. “I was afraid I would have to do a lot more running around before I found the owner,” he laughed.

“Thank you so much,” I croaked with emotion. “I was having an awful day, and you have just prevented a breakdown. Thank you. Please thank your daughter for me.”

“It was my fifteen-year-old son. He was joking that we should keep it for his medical bills. I’m glad we didn’t. So your breakdown is averted.” He laughed again.

I just stood there dumbfounded by the honesty it would take for a parent with a teenage son needing medical treatment to drive all this way just to return a wallet.

“Well, I will be on my way then. You have a good night.”

Long after the man was gone, I kept thinking about how his personal integrity convinced him to return my wallet even though he could have definitely used the money. Whenever I am reminded of him, my belief in goodness as a core moral value is restored.