

## **Focus, perseverance, and kindness**

This month I would like to focus on three traits that will help finish the year strong and keep from feeling like an April fool. The three traits are focus, perseverance, and kindness. This time of the year it is easy for fatigue to set in and cause us to lose focus and respond to others in a less than kind manner. Focusing on being purposeful in these areas can help prevent a slide backwards during this time, especially for seniors who are looking forward to being done. So, what are these traits? Focus is defined as “a point of concentration”, “a state or condition permitting clear perception or understanding”, and “to concentrate attention or effort”. Perseverance is defined as “continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or opposition”. Kindness is defined as “the quality or state of being kind”, “a kind deed”, and “affection”.

Focus therefore allows us to concentrate our attention and effort and have clear perception and understanding about our tasks and goals. During the final weeks of the school year it is very important to focus on the important tasks and goals in our lives and especially on the assignments and tasks for classes, activities, and families. There are a lot of things that fight for our attention during this time and many of them seem the most important or most critical. By being purposeful about focusing on completing these tasks, it helps identify the truly important ones and successfully complete more of them than we thought we would be able to do. So, don't lose focus and take time each day to focus on what needs to be accomplished to reach your goals.

Perseverance, by definition, is a trait that helps us overcome challenges and make it through difficult times and still achieve a goal. This time of the school year is also a great time to remind ourselves that we are capable of making it through tough times and face the challenges that come our way. Perseverance is helped by positive thinking, proper rest, and taking care of ourselves, on a daily basis. Perseverance is also helped by the previous trait, focus. Focusing on our strengths and our accomplishments can help remind us that we are capable of meeting the challenges and the good feeling that comes from working to complete the assignments, tasks, and goals.

Kindness allows us to achieve what we need to achieve without harming ourselves or others. It also provides that “spark” that provides the energy needed to persevere and focus. When we feel under pressure, overworked, and over scheduled it is easy to become agitated and respond in less than kind ways to ourselves and others. This is defeating in many ways, but especially in being able to focus and persevere because agitation, anger, rudeness, etc. are draining and take away the energy that is needed to complete what needs to be done and do it in an effective way. Being purposeful about being kind to ourselves and to others provides a spark of energy that helps complete what needs to be done. It also has the added benefit of making it where others may want to help.

